



NAVY NEWS

MARCH 2016

Indian summons

HMS Defender flies the flag for UK at international fleet review

Fjord escort

● A Royal Marine from 539 Assault Squadron is armed and ready on the shoreline east of Harstad in Norway as the UK prepares for the NATO Cold Response Exercise this month. See pages 2-3

Picture: POA(Phot) Carl Osmond





Pictures: POA(Phot) Carl Osmond
and Cpl Immanuel Johnson, USMC





Sub-zero heroes

Royal Marines in red-hot form as they prepare for NATO exercise

THE roar of motor engines echos off the snow-covered fjords of northern Norway.

Two fast raiding craft accompany a hovercraft as Royal Marines are landed ashore in the harsh winter wilderness.

The craft have been tearing up and down the inlets around the port of Harstad – more than 150 miles inside the Arctic Circle – as the men of 539 Assault Squadron get used to freezing conditions ahead of NATO's biggest winter war games.

More than 50 commandos from the squadron, based at RM Tamar in Devonport Naval Base, deployed to northern Norway with their ORC offshore raiding craft and Landing Craft (Air Cushioned) – hovercraft to the general public, or LCACs (“el cack”) in everyday Royal Marines parlance.

The eight weeks of training opened with the boat crews learning how to survive and operate as marines in the harsh Arctic conditions at Åsegarden camp outside Harstad, where the short days offer just a few hours of light in January.

Alongside their comrades from Kilo Company, 42 Commando, from Bickleigh outside Plymouth, the 539 men were taught basic survival skills by Royal Marines Mountain Leaders – the Corps' specialists in cold-weather warfare – moving on to travelling around using skis and snowshoes and finally fighting in the rugged terrain in

temperatures as low as -30°C.

Once acclimatised, the marines could move on to the business of amphibious operations; the squadron is expected to put Royal Marines ashore by landing or raiding craft whatever the climate.

The ORCs can carry a dozen commandos and reach speeds over 30kts, while the hovercraft can carry 16 Royal Marines or two 1,000kg pallets of kit, gliding over water as fast as 35kts.

Normally, such missions are carried out stealthily – but the squadron can also provide covering fire courtesy of ORCs armed with Gatling guns and 40mm grenade launchers.

And should anything go wrong ashore, the boat and hovercraft crews are expected to ferry casualties to a first-aid post or field hospital.

Two weeks have been set aside to learn the art of operating the craft in the Arctic – from the challenges of navigation (one snowy fjord with a rocky shore looks very much like another) to driving the hovercraft over ice, conducting long-range patrols and dropping and picking up reconnaissance parties.

“One of the toughest parts of operating in these conditions is the cold; you don't really realise how cold it is until you get out here – and when

you add the wind chill factor from travelling at 35 knots on the fjords, you really can feel it,” said hovercraft coxswain Mne ‘Tommo’ Thompson.

Mne Alex Foster, a landing craft coxswain, added: “The snow and ice make things very challenging, very different from the conditions which we are used to working in.

“It's a completely different world from operating on beaches in the UK.

“It's surprising how cold it gets when the sun goes down – which is very early in the afternoon. That's when we really have to look after our guys.”

Once 539's initial training package is completed, the squadron will embark six of its ORCs on the Dutch assault ship HMNLS Rotterdam which is heading to Norway for NATO's Cold Response 2016 exercise.

The exercise phase, which begins this month, will see 15,000 personnel from across the alliance practising the art of Arctic warfare by land, sea and air.

As well as several NATO units, the exercise features personnel from Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden, and the USA (as well as Norway and the UK obviously).

Meanwhile, 220 miles north, and Royal Marines Mountain Leaders

were sharing their expertise in Arctic warfare and survival with their US counterparts.

The commandos are instructing the men of the Black Sea Rotational Force at Porsangermoen – just 100 miles from the northernmost tip of Europe – ready for Cold Response.

Normally based at Constanta in Romania (where it's a balmy 12°C at this time of year), the US Marines of the Black Sea Rotational Force are being put through their paces by the Corps' cold weather experts – in northern Norway.

The ranges and lakes around Porsangermoen and Skoganvarre lie 300 miles inside the Arctic Circle, are just 100 miles from the North Cape and in mid-February enjoy just five and a half hours of daylight.

The temperature (if you're lucky) hits 4°C during the day... and if you're unlucky drops to -29°C by night (not counting the windchill).

Luckily, the Mountain Leaders have just the skills for coping, even in such hostile surroundings.

A snowshoe hike and setting up ten-man tents tested the skills learned within the first weeks of classroom and hands-on training – all preparation for next month's Cold Response exercise in and around the fjords, peaks and plateaus of northern Norway.

With the British green berets leading the way, the Americans conducted night moves, practising testing the thickness of ice and honing survival

and avalanche skills.

“I think the snowshoe hike through the thick snow and pulling the pulk emphasised a teamwork mentality that comes out when you are working as a group for an extended period of time,” said platoon sergeant S/Sgt Jake Roby.

Survival skills taught the US marines and sailors techniques to be used in extreme and dangerous situations, from setting up a shelter to catching and killing their own food.

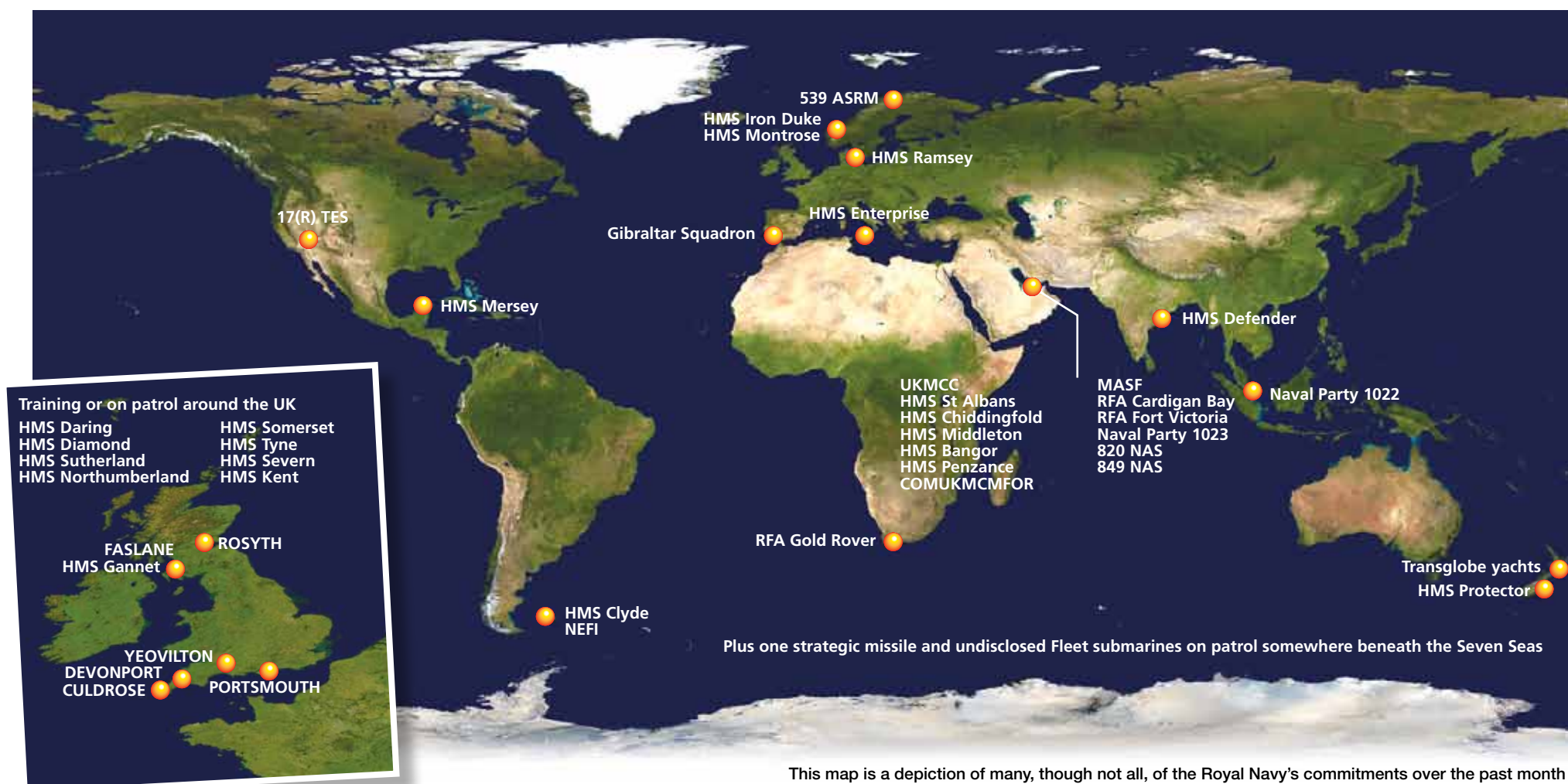
“Working with the Royal Marines Commandos is a positive experience; they demonstrate professionalism in all the classes we have been taught,” said Cpl Jimmy Sarath, a radio operator.

“This is my first time dealing with extreme cold. It isn't hard to adjust if you do exactly as the commandos have taught.

“It is great seeing that military-to-military training strengthening ties and Marines grasping knowledge from them.”

As well as the Royal Marines instructors at Porsangermoen, there are Wildcat helicopters of 847 Naval Air Squadron at Bardufoss, 160 miles to the southwest, making their debut in the Arctic snow, and elements of 3 Commando Brigade (including the raiding craft of 539 Assault Squadron) based near Harstad, all conducting winter training.





This map is a depiction of many, though not all, of the Royal Navy's commitments over the past month

WITH the UK shivering as temperatures plummeted, spare a thought for Royal Navy personnel in the Arctic Circle. Royal Marines from **539 Assault Squadron** were acclimatising in Norway (see pages 2-3) ahead of NATO's biggest winter war games Cold Response 16.

Also in Norway was **HMS Iron Duke** and **Monmouth** (see page 6) as the Type 23 frigates visited Bergen ahead of NATO Exercise Dynamic Guard, part of a prelude to Cold Response.

At the other end of the temperature scale, personnel from **HMS Defender** were feeling the heat in India (see pages 23-25) for the country's International Fleet Review.

Also enjoying some sunshine were the men and women aboard **HMS Protector** (see page 8) as she continued her historic patrol of the eastern side of Antarctica with a visit to New Zealand before returning to the Ross Sea.

Heading west and **HMS Mersey** proved to be the main attraction in Mexico (see page 6) as the patrol ship stopped off in the small town of Puerto Progreso on the north shore of the Yucatán peninsula.

The warmth of the Gulf found the crew of **HMS Bangor** enjoying some traditional nomadic hospitality in the Arabian Desert (see page 6).

Also in the region were fliers from RNAS Cudroze as they continued their mission supporting French forces against Daesh (see page 9) with Sea King crews from **849 NAS** acting as eyes in the sky for the FS Charles de Gaulle. Personnel from the squadron were also working in the Netherlands (see pages 16-17) where the Baggers joined F-16 Fighting Falcons for Exercise Skinners Gold.

Both missions provided ideal training as the Royal Navy prepares for the age of the new carriers, with First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas urging Portsmouth to provide an unforgettable welcome for **HMS Queen Elizabeth** next year (see page 11).

The British public will get their first chance to see the new fighter jets which will fly from the new carriers (see page 11) as the United States Marine Corps demonstrate the **F-35B** at the Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford this summer.

The Fleet Air Arm's pilots of tomorrow have been taking their first steps at RAF Cranwell where **703 NAS** carry out elementary flying training in Grob Tutor aircraft (see pages 14-15).

Meanwhile **HMS Daring** marked her tenth birthday during weapons and aviation training off Portland (see page 7). Sister ship **Dauntless** played host to labradors Ted and Skye as the MOD Police dogs completed their training as drug finders (see page 7).

The Royal Navy paid tribute to **Fleet Commander** Vice Admiral Sir Philip Jones as he handed over the duties of his office to Vice Admiral Ben Key (see page 6). Admiral Jones will soon become Britain's ranking sailor when he is appointed First Sea Lord.

Celebrities from the worlds of film and music paid tribute to sailors and Royal Marines at The Sun's annual **Military Awards** (see right).

Tributes were also paid to the men and women of **HMS Gannet** (see page 5) as the base at Prestwick was officially decommissioned three weeks after search-and-rescue operations came to an end. At RNAS Cudroze, veterans of six decades of rescue joined the final generation of fliers, and Duran Duran frontman Simon Le Bon, for a gala dinner to mark the end of **771 NAS**.

We finish as we started, in the cold, as the **Royal Navy Winter Sports Association** held its Alpine Championships in Tignes (see pages 42-43) where temperatures dropped to -33°C.



Rod: You all rock Stars' tributes to Naval heroes

ROCK legend Rod Stewart and his wife Penny Lancaster pose with sailors and Royal Marines from HMS Bulwark having just presented the ship with the award for 'best unit' in the UK's Armed Forces.

Indeed, lifesaving efforts across three continents were the order of the day as sailors, green berets and the Fleet Air Arm were singled out at *The Sun's* annual Military Awards – aka the Millies.

From the men and women of Bulwark plucking refugees out of the Mediterranean to stemming the tide of Ebola in West Africa and the crew of HMS Clyde assisting 200 passengers fleeing a blazing cruise ship in the Falklands, selfless deeds were rewarded at the MOD-supported awards, which are now in their eighth year.

Bulwark saved 4,747 souls in the central Mediterranean last spring – 1,300 alone in one epic day of rescues – showing, in the words of their CO at the time,

Capt Nick Cooke-Priest, "unique compassion" in the process.

For their efforts, the assault ship was named the best unit in the Armed Forces in 2015.

"I feel huge pride in receiving this award for two reasons," said Capt Cooke-Priest.

"Firstly, in my view we executed the task we were set, this was absolutely a reflection of those involved. And secondly, because we felt we were doing something good. There is no greater privilege than saving someone's life."

Words echoed by the 'sailor of the year', PO Luke Hallis of HMS Clyde who clambered aboard a lifeboat occupied by scores of passengers from the stricken French cruise ship *Le Borealis* off the Falklands.

"They'd been in the boat for about five hours and were exhausted, sick and suffering," said the 35-year-old senior rating from Sheffield. "When I jumped on the first lifeboat, they cheered – I'll always remember it."

He received his award from TV

presenter Jeremy Clarkson – also one of the judging panel, which consists of a mix of celebrities and military figures.

Man of Steel actor Henry Cavill, who plays the latest incarnation of Superman on the silver screen, presented the award for Best Reservist to green beret Maj Henry Dowling, recognised for his work in Sierra Leone as part of the UK's effort to prevent the spread of Ebola.

"Any opportunity I have to show respect to members of the Armed Forces who have done wonderful things is an opportunity I would jump at – especially an opportunity to give an award to a member of the Royal Marines Reserves, as my brother is a Royal Marine," said the actor.

And there was a joint award for the lifesavers of the RN and RAF with the Search and Rescue units of both – in the Navy's case, HMS Gannet and 771 NAS – presented with a special trophy to mark their efforts over the past six decades.

2SL: Embrace UK's diversity

BRITAIN'S third most senior Naval officer welcomes the idea of women on the front line in close-combat roles.

Addressing the issue of diversity in today's Royal Navy, Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock told a gathering of retired senior Naval officers in Whitehall the 21st Century Senior Service needed to "stop faffing about" and embrace people of every ability, every religion, every background, every ethnic group.

Admiral Woodcock said it was "imperative to have a Naval Service manned with the best people who can do the job."

"That's black and Asian – and white. That's male and that's female. That's heterosexual and homosexual. That is the workforce we represent: we must represent."

"Going on to a ship now which is not mixed manned is an extraordinary, strange experience. It is not normal."

"Normal is the UK population. I want to see more UK black and Asian men and women at sea, as many as we can get."

"Women in close combat is very much a political animal at the moment. The Naval Service will lean into women in close combat."

"Indeed, in Afghanistan one of the Naval Service Military Crosses was awarded to an eight-stone female who carried a 14-stone male on her back for 400 yards, carrying a pack that was three quarters of her bodyweight."

Despite numbering half the populace, women account for less than ten per cent of the Naval Service, something Admiral Woodcock says must be addressed.

"Let's stop faffing about," he said. "We need to recruit across the totality of the UK workforce. Everyone we can, everyone who wants to join the Navy and everyone who wants to stay. We need flexible employment."

"We must work out career structures that do not disable the most able people."

Bon voyage, SAR folk

SILHOUETTED by the weak winter sun streaming through the door of the hangar which has been the home of their trusty steed for decades, HMS Gannet's Guard Officer stands to attention as his unit passes into history.

Three weeks after their final fly past around central and western Scotland, the search and rescuers formally called time on their unit's illustrious history with an official decommissioning of their base at Prestwick.

Over a 44-year period, Gannet's men and women have saved or assisted thousands of people at sea or over land, latterly in distinctive red and grey Sea Kings.

In its final year of operation, Gannet was again the UK's busiest search and rescue unit (as it has consistently been over the past decade; in 2009 its men and women performed an unlikely-to-be-surpassed record of 447 rescues).

But with SAR duties transferred to a civilian firm on New Year's Day, Gannet Flight – and its red and grey Sea King Mk5s – are no longer required.

Culdrose's CO Capt Adrian Orchard was the guest of honour for the final ceremonial divisions and decommissioning ceremony – conducted inside thanks to the near-persistent foul weather which has lashed southwest Scotland this winter.

"Over the years, HMS Gannet has enjoyed immense support the length and breadth of Scotland," said the unit's final Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Charlie Fuller.

"This ceremony is the final piece of a rather emotional farewell jigsaw, with our official decommissioning here today."

There are still a few days to go until Gannet's Cornish counterparts 771 formally bow out (March 22), time aplenty for other farewell events between the end of SAR duties on January 1 and the



● Simon Le Bon (sixth from left) and his wife Yasmin pose with present-day aviators and SAR legends ahead of 771 NAS' heroes and legends gala dinner

actual act of decommissioning.

Like the heroes and legends gala dinner which brought (a) a bit of colour to the rather drab 1970s milieu of Culdrose's ward room and (b) some pop star royalty.

Veterans of six decades of rescues – many of whose chests bristled with gallantry medals – were invited to dine with today's final generation of SAR fliers – including the head of the FAA, Rear Admiral Keith Blount – and some of those they've plucked from harm's way down the years.

Like Duran Duran frontman Simon Le Bon who was as famous in 1985 as the members of One Direction are in 2016.

Beyond a passion for new wave synth pop, the now 58-year-old is a keen yachtsman – which almost proved his undoing in 1985 when he entered the Fastnet Race with his yacht Drum.

The vessel lost its keel, turned turtle and trapped Le Bon and his shipmates in the upturned hull for around three quarters of an hour until a Wessex from 771 came

on the scene and rescue diver PO(ACMN) Larry Slater hauled the sailors out – subsequently earning himself a George Medal... and an appearance on *This Is Your Life*.

Vice Admiral Paul Boissier, Chief Executive of the Royal National Lifeboat Institute, presented an RNLI Vellum to the RN for its significant contribution to life saving around the British Isles.

"The evening went extremely well with some prominent people praising the virtues of all of us," said retired WO(ACMN) Rab Butler. "This event will never be repeated so I'm glad I was there."

Admiral Blount reminded attendees that there were many gallant men and women gathered under one roof for a "unique gathering of people spanning many of the years of the Royal Navy's Search and Rescue commitment."

"No other force has been awarded as many awards and decorations; all of you should feel extremely proud of your achievements."

Picture: CPO(Phot) Tam McDonald

Ramsey's on NATO mission

HMS Ramsey edged her way down one of Europe's great man-made waterways – the Kiel Canal – to join a NATO minehunter group.

It took nine hours of careful seamanship to complete the 98km-passage, giving the two young officers embarked on Ramsey for training – Sub Lts Conor Loudon and Chris Fraser-Shaw – the chance to test their seaman's eye and ship-handling abilities (in places the canal is just 100 metres wide). Chris described the nine hours as the highlight of his Naval career so far.

In Kiel the sailors were invited to attend the ceremony which saw the German Navy take charge of the minehunter group – one of two operated by NATO in European waters – from the Dutch as Cdr Martin Schwarz and his flagship FGS Donau took charge.

It's the task of the international group to practise minehunting collectively so they can respond to any crisis as well as to conduct exercises dealing with historic ordnance; the seabed of the Baltic and North Sea remain littered with the detritus of two world wars such as dumped bombs, unexploded torpedoes, shells and mines.

The task of meshing in with the other ships in the force began with a visit to Copenhagen.

"I am really looking forward to the next few months," said Sub Lt Fraser-Shaw.

"It will be exciting working with our NATO allies and I have a great opportunity to continuously develop my skills as a warfare officer and learn new things. It will also be good to see the places which we will visit and the cities where we will stop throughout the trip."



Divers go to Cherbrrrrrrg

THE lure of diving in France. The Côte D'Azur. Warm seas. Fabulous beaches. Beautiful bodies.

Try Cherbourg. In January. Sea temperature 10°C (if you're lucky). Murky waters. No beaches. Beautiful bodies hidden beneath layers of clothing.

Still, sailors from the Fleet Diving Squadron accepted the invite from their counterparts and made the short ferry trip to Normandy to practise underwater bomb disposal skills.

The Groupe plongeurs demineurs de la Manche (Channel Diving Group of Explosive Clearance Divers) asked their colleagues from Britain and Germany to join them in and around Cherbourg harbour to share their experiences and techniques of locating and neutralising mines and improvised devices.

The Cherbourg-based French clearance divers – who describe themselves as 'men of cold blood' – are specialists in dealing with maritime counter-terrorism.

It's the first time they have hosted a combined exercise, making use both of the port militaire – the naval base on the west side of Cherbourg harbour (opposite the berths used by cross-Channel ferries) – and its installations for training in and out of the water, with base staff, sailors and fire-fighters joining in a final exercise after ten days of joint training at the divers' Vulcain (Vulcan) headquarters.

"We shared both explosive ordnance disposal and diving techniques," said Lt Jonny Campbell. "We trained against current threats and developed close links with our Channel neighbours. As the UK and France work together ever more closely in defence, this demonstrates the strong bond between our two nations."

On the back of this inaugural exercise, the team at Horsea Island are looking at hosting their own international workout next year.



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Key change at the top

BRITAIN'S second most senior sailor was applauded by several hundred sailors, Royal Marines and civilians as he left the Royal Navy's headquarters.

After three years of directing operations around the world, Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Sir Philip Jones (*on the right in LA (Phot) Guy Pool's picture*) handed over the duties of his office to Vice Admiral Ben Key.

After the farewell from the staff of Leach Building and a short boat ride across the harbour to HMS Dauntless, the formal act of supersession took place on the destroyer's flight deck in Portsmouth Naval Base.

"It has been a huge honour and privilege to serve as Fleet Commander for the past three years," Admiral Jones said.

"During that time, the Royal Navy has remained as busy as ever, deployed worldwide deterring would-be aggressors, reassuring our allies and promoting the United Kingdom and our interests around the globe.

"It has been a pleasure for me to meet so many of the extraordinary men and women, sailors, Royal Marines and civilians alike, who make the Royal Navy truly world class."

His successor has been a naval officer for 32 years, beginning his career as a Lynx observer before training as a principal warfare officer and moving on to command minehunter Sandown, frigates Iron Duke and Lancaster, and finally HMS Illustrious. Most recently he was in charge of all RN training with two years at the helm as Flag Officer Sea Training in Plymouth.

"In recent years the sailors and Royal Marines of the Naval Service have consistently delivered success on operations," he said.

"I am determined to support the Fleet to ensure it can continue to do so. In an uncertain world we must be ready and able to fight and win – and the men and women in the front line must be supported to do so."

After a six-week break Admiral Jones – one of a dwindling number of Falkland veterans still serving in the RN – will become Britain's ranking sailor when he is appointed First Sea Lord, taking over from Admiral Sir George Zambellas with a symbolic 'transfer of power' aboard Nelson's (and 1SL's) flagship HMS Victory.

As part of the shake-up of senior posts across the MOD, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach takes over as Chief of Defence Staff, the highest military position in the UK.

His former role as Vice Chief of Defence Staff will be filled by Royal Marine Lt Gen Gordon Messenger – the first four-star green beret since 1977.



Candid Bergen's warm welcome

HMS Iron Duke approaches the imposing 1,057-metre long Askøy Bridge as the Type 23 makes its way into Bergen in Norway.

The frigate, along with sister ship Monmouth, passed under the suspension bridge that crosses Byfjorden between Bergen and Askøy in Hordaland.

The ships visited Bergen ahead of NATO war games around the fjords.

Iron Duke is assigned to NATO's Standing Group 1 – the first RN ship in more than a decade to attach to the formation, which patrols the Baltic and northern European waters.

That attachment so far has taken her to London and, slightly further afield, the Dutch capital Amsterdam as part of some joint training with the Royal Netherlands Navy.

That continued during the three-day passage to Bergen, which nestles in the fjords of western Norway – roughly on the same latitude as the Shetlands – and where, mid-Feb, it was a few degrees below zero.

In addition, the fastest warships in the world – Norwegian 'coastal corvettes' HNoMs Storm and Steil (top speed 60kts, or about twice as quick as Iron Duke and Monmouth) – and

Polish frigate ORP General Kosciuszko joined the NATO group to make final preparations before heading out into the fjords for an exercise.

The Brits opened their gangway to visitors – but didn't get too many thanks to their rather distant berth instead of the colourful historic setting of the Bryggen often used by visiting warships.

Still, the weekend in Bergen did allow a pre-sail get together for the participants of Exercise Dynamic Guard, a week-long test of the ships assigned to Group 1, which also comprises Spanish frigate ESPS Alvaro de Bazán and supply ship ESPS Cantabria.

Played out in the sea, fjords and inlets around Austevoll, two dozen miles south of Bergen, Dynamic Guard honed electronic warfare skills and tested the ability of the ships to fight off anti-ship missiles.

The exercises for Iron Duke and her NATO allies continue this month with the sea phase of Cold Response, the treaty organisation's regular war games which test the ability of allied land, sea and air forces to operate in the hostile environment of snow, ice and temperatures as low as -30°C.

Mersey's the Mayan attraction in Mexico

FEMALE sailors aboard HMS Mersey shared their experiences of life in the RN to help the Mexican Navy adjust to the huge cultural shift.

Three of the crew from the patrol ship were invited to give an insight into being a woman at sea as the patrol ship stopped off in the small town of Puerto Progreso on the north shore of the Yucatán peninsula.

The Mexicans have just begun to start sending women to sea in their vessels, so Lt Rachael Clark, Std Amy Binns and LMA Laura Clark spent a morning regaling their trailblazing Mexican counterparts with stories of life in the RN and the varied jobs onboard...

...and then many of them did the same for the Mexican press who were intrigued by the large

percentage of female sailors aboard the Portsmouth-based warship (one in four Mersey sailors is a woman, whereas the average across the Senior Service is about one in ten).

Puerto Progreso was the third stop of the deployment (after Key West and Bermuda) and is a very rare (and unusual) port of call for a Royal Navy warship, which is possibly why her visit made the front pages of several local newspapers.

Due to the shallow – but beautiful – blue water, the port is actually four miles out to sea at the end of one of the longest piers in the world.

That dislocation didn't stop the ship hosting an official lunch, with guests including Admiral Solano

Armenta, Commander of the 9th Naval Zone, and staging a demonstration, reception and ceremonial sunset for the same and other dignitaries.

The very British proceedings were given a Mexican twist by a mariachi band performing folk songs.

The Brits were also given a tour of the Mexican Navy patrol ship ARM Baja California ahead of joint exercises in the Gulf of Mexico.

And lest you think it was all work, work, work... not a few members of the ship's company hit the beaches of Progreso (it's was in the mid-20s Celsius, even in early February) while the more adventurous made the 80-mile journey to the world-famous Mayan ruins at Chichen Itza.

Tents time for Bangor

LOOKING just like the fish out of water that they are, the crew of HMS Bangor enjoy some traditional nomadic hospitality in the Arabian desert.

The crew and their ship made the short journey from their base in Bahrain along the coast to Al Jubail – the eastern home of the Royal Saudi Navy – to train alongside a sister ship with combined exercises at sea, then foster close ties ashore.

In the late 80s with the threat of mining in the Gulf severe as a result of the conflicts in the region, the Saudis ordered three Sandown-class minehunters to keep their waters safe... while the RN ordered 12, of which Bangor was number nine.

Twenty-five years later, the class remains at the cutting edge of mine warfare – especially in deeper waters thanks to its detachable sonar.

The two navies got the chance to see how the other operates a Sandown in 2016 with a couple of days of training – negotiating minefields, joint manoeuvres and mine detection and destruction.

Sailors from Bangor and its Saudi counterpart HMS Al Jawf traded places to experience the different cultures and ways of working near-identical vessels.

"It was one of the best experiences that I have had in my naval career. To be able to spend a day onboard with our Saudi friends was a real honour," said AB Fraser Bowman, one of Bangor's mine warfare specialists.

"I knew some of them as we trained together at HMS Collingwood, so it was great to see them again in HMS Al Jawf."

With the exercises completed, the two ships entered King Abdul Aziz Naval Base – about 80 miles from Bahrain – to exchange formalities (and gifts), discuss operations in the region and, most importantly, play football (the honours were even).

Bangor's company were invited to a traditional Bedouin camp in the desert, where they were able to meet residents and learn about the traditions of their hosts.

"Our Saudi hosts made us feel incredibly welcome," said Bangor's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Tom Weaver. "We have a lot more in common than just the Sandown ships we serve in and members of my crew who spent time onboard HMS Al Jawf enjoyed it immensely."



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Picture: LA(Phot) Guy Pool

Dauntless' ruff seize

MEET Ted. The crew of HMS Dauntless have. And Skye – as the police dogs were brought aboard the destroyer to complete their training as drug finders.

The two labradors prowled the passageways and compartments of the Type 45, testing their ability to sniff out illegal narcotics hidden either on board the ship or aboard one of the sailors.

The dogs undergo an eight-week course courtesy of the MOD Police Animal Training Centre; by the end of it, they must be able to detect a single gramme of drugs hidden on somebody – that's about one third of a sugar cube.

And on Dauntless, there are 180 sailors and well over 600 compartments to search – spread over several decks, making for a particularly challenging environment both for the dogs and their handlers.

At present Portsmouth Naval Base is safeguarded by (among others) PC Glenn Morby and Bono (explosives dog, not the U2 frontman).

Ted will be joining Bono on patrols of the base – the latter conducts sweeps around HMS Victory every day.

“With Ted I will be able to act mainly as a deterrent around the ships, the jetties, the BAE shipyard areas, as well as doing spot checks on the gate for example,” said Glenn. “It is a very varied role.”

Glenn was with Ted throughout training – it's vital that police officer and dog work as a team.

“This type of training is ideal as we can hide drugs in an environment they are unused to – as well as hide it on personnel to determine if they can sniff it out,” Glenn explained.

“The dogs must work harder to detect drugs on a person – they have to be able to determine very quickly who is carrying the drugs and then whether it is a significant amount or just someone who may have inadvertently come into contact with them.”

On board Dauntless, the labradors were taken around the hangar, down to the junior rates' mess and were walked through corridors to locate packages of drugs deliberately hidden around the ship.

Several of the ship's company also volunteered to conceal a package and walk past Ted and Skye to see if they could be detected.

In every case the dogs managed to find the illegal stashes – and were rewarded with a ball and a pat from their handler.

“It's quite rare that we would get a dog team on board,” said Dauntless' RPO Kris McMahon, “but in the event that we or another warship does in the future, it is important for them to get to grips with all the different sights, sounds and smells they will encounter.

“Things like going up and down ladders for example could be intimidating for the dogs but they need to be able to find the environment as normal as possible so that they can find anything unusual on board.”

Sam's bravery commended

A ROYAL Marines musician who risked his own life to stop a 'suicidal' woman from jumping 80ft off one of Manchester's most famous bridges is being recognised by the city's police.

Capt Sam Hairsine clambered over railings on the Hulme Arch Bridge to reach out and grab the desperate 39-year-old before she could plunge on to a dual carriageway below.

While a passer-by offered words of reassurance, Sam was able to help the potential jumper to safety, assisted by an off-duty policeman, fire-fighter and security guard. She was subsequently detained under the Mental Health Act.

Those actions have earned the musician from the Royal Marines' Portsmouth Band a Police Chief's Citizen Commendation.

And while Sam's actions were praised, the musician was surprised by the attitude of some teenage onlookers who were urging the distraught lady to jump – and filming proceedings on their mobile phones.

“There were people nearby just watching – I think that's weird. The people who were filming it were just sick. I think they just had no concept that she was in a very dark place,” said Sam, who's in Manchester studying a masters degree in conducting at the Royal Northern College of Music.

A very satisfying ten years

THE unmistakeable shadow of a Type 45 destroyer is cast on to the rather green waters of Weymouth Bay.

And forming the number ten on their flight deck are members of the ship's company of HMS Daring, as the first of the Royal Navy's air defence destroyers reaches her tenth birthday.

Crew paused weapons and aviation training off Portland as the Portsmouth-based warship emerged from a period of maintenance to celebrate the milestone – captured on camera by the crew of the ship's Wildcat helicopter from 825 Naval Air Squadron.

And then they tucked into a T45-shaped cake provided by builders BAE.

Launched at Scotstoun on a raw February day back in 2006, Daring sailed into her home port almost three years to the day.

After extensive trials and training, including working with the battle group of the USS Enterprise off the Eastern Seaboard of the US in 2010, and the firing of her Sea Viper main weapon system the following spring, the destroyer conducted her maiden deployment (to the Gulf) in 2012, followed by a 'world tour' covering 2013-14.

Part flag-flying, part test of the Type 45's ability to track ballistic missiles (which Daring did), the deployment hit the headlines when Daring was diverted to assist the people of the Philippines in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan, earning the Firmin Sword of Peace for their efforts.

Her sailors assisted around 10,000 people whose homes or livelihoods had been affected by the storm, provided medical treatment to 300 souls and delivered over seven tonnes of fresh water to areas where the supply was knocked out.

Daring's global deployment accounted for a very sizeable proportion of the 203,186 miles clocked up since her launch – that's eight times around the world – at sea during 17,100 hours under way (that's 101 weeks or just shy of two years).

All that travelling has required the guzzling of 60,000 cubic metres of fuel – 60 million litres or enough to fill the tanks of one million family cars.

You need more than fuel to sustain you on the seven seas, of course. The chefs in the galley have got through half a million sausages, 228 tonnes of spuds and 60 tonnes of baked beans.

And sheets from 836,000 toilet rolls (must've been all those baked beans...) were flushed down the heads. Unrolled, the paper would stretch for 25,000 kilometres (over 15,000 miles)... or from Daring's home in Portsmouth to the Pacific island of Guam and back.

More than 3,000 shells for the 4.5in main gun, more than 200,000 rounds for the SA80 rifles carried by the ship's company and nearly 400,000 rounds for the machine/miniguns.

As for the future, well after a spring of training and exercises, Daring is due to head out on her third deployment – a nine-month stint east of Suez – in the latter half of 2016.





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Sound of silence

Another first for Protector

ICE patrol ship HMS Protector has set another record on her historic deployment to Antarctica as she became the first Royal Navy ship to visit McMurdo Base on Ross Island.

The bright blue skies in the composite main photograph are in stark contrast to the gales and storms which hit as Protector crossed the Southern Ocean from Christchurch in New Zealand.

Members of the ship's company visited Captain Robert Falcon Scott's Discovery hut and a small chapel on the base.

"It was an amazing experience and a good opportunity to step ashore in Antarctica for the first time ever," said LSC Janson 'Frenchie' Pierre.

Protector anchored in McMurdo Sound near to Vince's Cross on Hut Point. George Vince was the first man to die in the Sound, one of Scott's Discovery Expedition party of 1901 to 1904. He was caught in a blizzard and fell into the icy water.

A small team from Protector, led by CO Capt Rory Bryan, visited McMurdo Station, named after Lt Archibald McMurdo of HMS Terror, which first charted the area in 1841 under the command of explorer James Clark Ross.

"This is a real opportunity for the RN to visit McMurdo base and develop our relationship with the Antarctic community in the Ross Sea and local area," said Capt Bryan.

The United States base is the largest area of human habitation on the Antarctic continent with approximately 1,000 people working there during the summer months. It is also a hub for stores and support to resupply a number of other bases in the region, including the South Pole base and the New Zealand Antarctic Scott base 3km away.

There are two large laboratory complexes at McMurdo which conduct research into a wide variety of scientific disciplines and co-ordinate additional research in many other satellite stations across the Antarctic continent.

Protector's survey team also collected bathymetric data of the region, some of which had never been surveyed.

Once the data is processed onboard, it is sent to the UK Hydrographic Office in New Zealand and to the US to increase understanding of the seabed and expand the areas considered safe to navigate in.

A search was conducted over a possible shoal point identified in 1968 and proven not to exist in that

position; however work further south towards Cape Armitage could not be completed due to very thick sea ice.

LS(HM) Andrew 'Hamish' David said: "It was very cold, but awesome and great to get some survey work done in an area not surveyed well before."

After a day of poor ice conditions and strong winds the team were able to meet the New Zealand team and were shown around the area by some of the scientists and expedition staff at Scott Base.

This is much smaller with a laboratory complex which focuses on climatology, biology and geological sciences, in particular climate monitoring.

Protector's diving team were also able to dive near McMurdo base and, although extremely cold and probably the most southerly dive for a Royal Navy team, it proved to be as interesting below the surface as it was above.

Lt Martin Simard, a reservist from the Royal Canadian Navy, who joined Protector at the end of last year, said: "In the space of a year I have seen the Arctic and Antarctica, it means a lot to me."

He, along with Lt Dale Molenaar, joined Protector for a two-and-a-half-month exchange programme aimed at increasing the seagoing experience of junior officers in the Canadian Navy.

Protector arrived back in the region after becoming the first Royal Navy ship to visit New Zealand for seven years.

The ice patrol vessel headed into Lyttelton, the port for Christchurch, to be greeted with a Powhiri – a traditional Maori welcoming ceremony. The ship's company responded with a rendition of *Heart of Oak* before a sunset ceremony on the main deck.

Protector held an open day when more than 3,000 visitors patiently queued on the quayside, with Percy the Penguin entertaining the children.

Capt Bryan also laid a wreath on behalf of the ship at the Lyttelton memorial, which honours the 185 souls who died during the earthquake of 2011.

Protector sailed from Plymouth in October, travelling the long way East via the Suez Canal, Oman and Western Australia to Hobart so that she could conduct inspections on behalf of the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources. She ventured further south than any Royal Navy expedition in nearly 175 years during her work in the Ross Sea.

Pictures: LA(Phot) Nicky Wilson



● RN Diver Ben Gaskell in Lyttelton



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RAFALE WINNERS

CLIMBING sharply over the Gulf two Rafale jets from France's flagship head off on another strike mission against the forces of evil – a mission guided and safeguarded by fliers from Culdrose.

The 'eyes in the sky' of the Fleet Air Arm are providing direct front-line support daily to the missions flown by French forces against Daesh in the Middle East.

The distinctive Sea King Airborne Surveillance and Control Mk7 helicopters – immediately identifiable by the large black sack sticking out of the fuselage – are scouring Gulf skies and seas for any potential threat to the Charles de Gaulle, whose flight deck is launching Rafale and Super Etendard jets on combat missions against the fundamentalists.

It's a mission the Sea Kings were designed for – and did so with aplomb during the opening stages of the 2003 conflict in Iraq.

But for much of the past decade, the Baggers spent most of their time high above Afghanistan, flying 800 missions, tracking the movements of insurgents and terrorists, helping ground troops make 150 arrests and seize tonnes of drugs, weapons and bomb-making ingredients.

High over the Gulf, the eyes of the crews are fixed both on the present and the daily strikes by the French – their ground and carrier-based jets are conducting around 100 missions per week – and on the future and the return of Royal Navy fast jet operations when HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales enter service with F-35 stealth fighters.

To that end, as well as carrying out surveillance, the Sea King crews have been directing French NH-90 helicopters and Rafale fighter jets to maintain their fighter controller

skills – vital with the F-35 coming into service.

"It's great to see how the French operate," said Lt Jonathan Duke, one of three pilots with Okinawa Flight, the detachment from 849 Naval Air Squadron which is using supply ship RFA Fort Victoria as its launchpad for operations.

"With our own carriers on the way, there are lots of lessons that we can learn to ensure that we are ready for them."

Conditions in the Gulf at this time of year are relatively pleasant – daytime temperatures of 20°C – but maintaining helicopters whose airframes are more than 40 years old is demanding for Okinawa Flight's engineers and technicians: for every hour a Bagger spends in Gulf skies it demands 20 hours' attention in Fort Victoria's hangar.

"This has been a fantastic opportunity for Okinawa Flight to put their training into practice," said Lt Cdr Simon Wood, 849's senior pilot.

"With the exceptional support of RFA Fort Victoria, flying in support of the Charles de Gaulle Carrier Battle Group has provided a unique opportunity to work with our French counterparts."

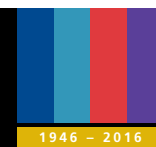
Although most of the Sea King force retires this month – the red and grey Search and Rescue units at HMS Gannet and 771 Naval Air Squadron at Culdrose, and the green 'flying cavalry' of the Royal Marines in the Commando Helicopter Force at Yeovilton – the Baggers continue to act as the eyes of the Fleet until 2018.

Hot Bagger action in Holland, pages 16-17



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Bob Chalmers, FPS Member



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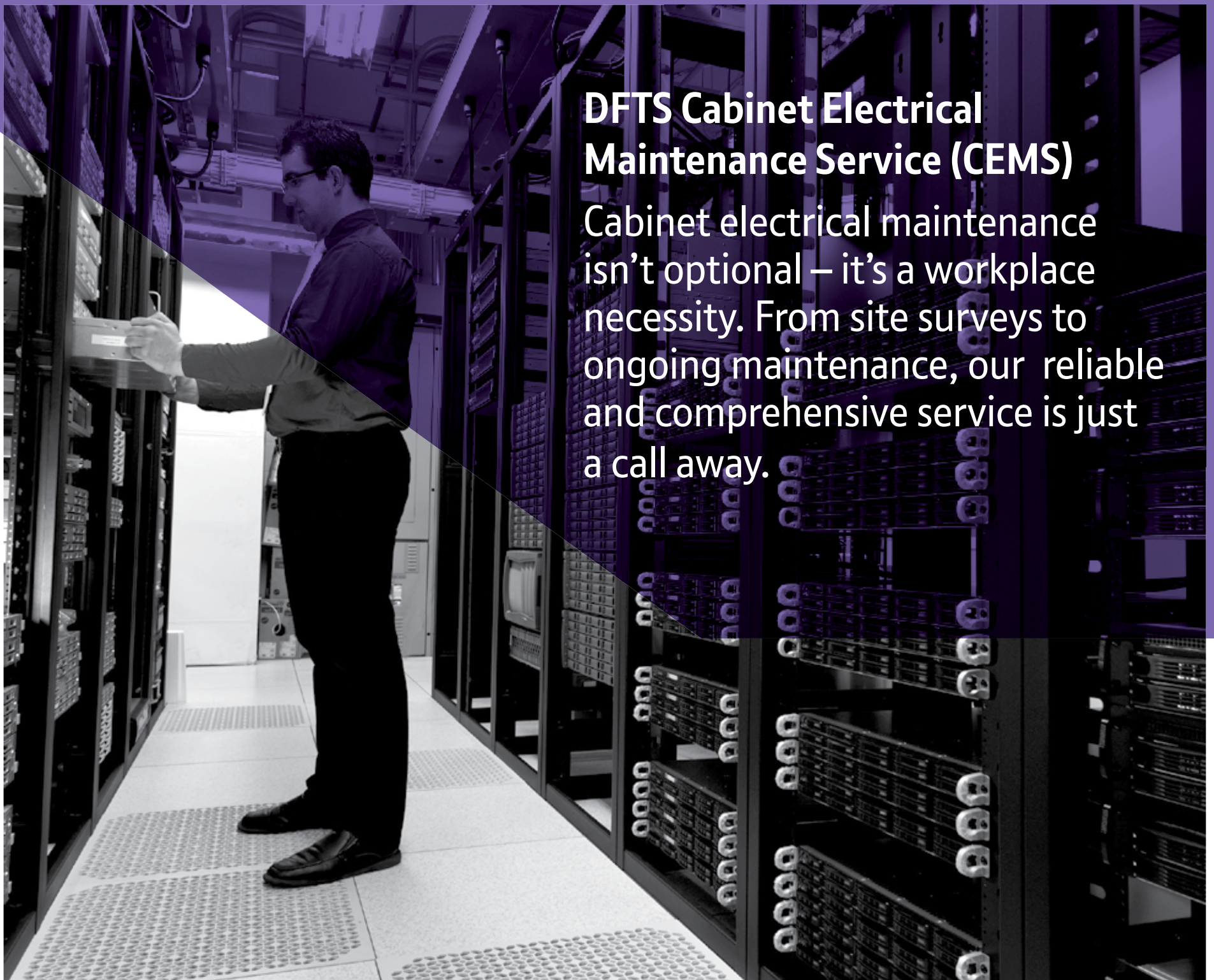
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Warlords leading the RIAT act with F-35B

THE British public will get their first chance to see the Royal Navy's new strike fighter jet this summer.

The F-35B Lightning II stealth jet – destined to fly from the Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers – is due to appear at the Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford in July.

Royal Navy personnel are currently testing and evaluating the new jets at 17(R) Squadron at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

The F-35B, which will be flown by a United States Marine Corps pilot from VM-FAT 501, nicknamed the Warlords and based at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort in South Carolina, is expected to make a flypast at the show.

News of the RIAT appearance came as the F-35 programme notched up 50,000 flying hours, while scientists in the UK revealed the tough testing it is putting the airframe through.

The UK government recently announced plans to speed up the purchase of 24 of the combat aircraft, a decision that will see two front-line squadrons – 809 NAS and 617 Squadron RAF – operating from the UK's two new aircraft carriers by 2023.

US Marine Corps Deputy Commander for Aviation Lt Gen Jon M Davis said: "The US Marine Corps is looking forward to demonstrating the capabilities of the F-35B Lightning II in the skies over the United Kingdom this July."

The F-35B's appearance will be the latest in a long list of legendary military aircraft that have made their UK debut at RIAT. These have included the F-14 Tomcat in 1976, the MiG-23 in 1991, the Typhoon in 1995, the V-22 Osprey in 2006 and the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force Kawasaki P1 in 2015.

Air Tattoo Chief Executive Andy Armstrong said: "No doubt the sight of F-35s in the sky will be quite common for future generations but this summer, all those who attend our air show will enjoy a first glimpse of that future."

"Over the years, the Air Tattoo has featured the UK and European debuts of some of the world's most iconic aircraft but few will have been as important to the UK's future defence capability as the F-35. I am sure many people will want to join us to witness this piece of aviation history being made."

The Air Tattoo is staged annually in support of the RAF Charitable Trust. Tickets for this year's event, which runs from July 8 to 10, are available at www.airtattoo.com.

All variants of the jet – F-35A, B and C – have so far clocked up nearly six years in the skies over the USA and Europe.

British and American test pilots, together with the US Marine Corps, have completed 18,000 hours in the B version which is capable of short take-offs and vertical landings.

The F-35 first flew back in June 2008. The programme passed the 25,000-hour mark at the end of 2014, and with the aircraft rolling off the production line in increasing numbers for the six nations who've bought them (110 aircraft are under construction at present), the 100,000-mile-barrier will be smashed in much quicker time.

So far 155 F-35s in various forms (the A model is a standard land-based jet, the C is a 'cats-and-trap' version to operate from US carriers) have been delivered from factories in Italy and Fort Worth, Texas.

In addition there are 18 prototype models flown by test pilots at Edwards and Pax River, near Washington DC.

The prototypes have accounted for 12,050

hours, the operational jets; the rest with one third of the programme's overall flying time achieved in 2015.

"The F-35 programme continues to grow and accelerate as we complete additional flight testing and increase deliveries to our US and partner warfighters," said Lt Gen Christopher Bogdan, F-35 Joint Programme Executive Officer.

"The next 50,000 hours will be achieved much quicker as we double the size of the F-35 fleet worldwide in the next three years alone."

To date, more than 250 F-35 pilots and 2,400 aircraft maintainers from six nations have been trained to operate and look after the aircraft.

Meanwhile, scientists and experts on Humberside will be putting strains and stresses on the F-35 Lightning II to ensure the stealth fighter-bomber is up to a lifetime of demanding operations.

The airframe of each F-35, which is being built jointly by Lockheed Martin and the UK's BAE Systems, has a lifespan of around 8,000 hours – more than 47 entire weeks airborne.

Two 8,000-hour tests have already been conducted by the BAE team at their Military Air and Information site in Brough, just west of Hull.

Now a third stage is about to start to prove the airframe will be able to safely handle a variety of flying conditions it could experience when in service.

The engineers use a special 350-tonne test rig, which has been built to 'fly' the F-35 through a series of scenarios.

More than 20 miles of wiring, 2,500 strain gauges and 160 loading actuators are designed to subject

the aircraft to a range of loads that it could typically encounter when airborne.

"We've pushed the testing to the limits, ensuring that the F-35 will fly safely and effectively throughout its lifetime of service," said Andy Prendergast, operations manager for structural and dynamic testing.

"Reaching two complete lifetimes of testing is an important milestone for our structural test facility at Brough, and demonstrates the proven endurance of the F-35 airframe."

"We will further qualify this by starting a third lifetime of testing."

His team has rigorously tested a dozen aircraft types over the past 40 years from the legendary Buccaneer and Harrier right up to the Eurofighter.

Around one sixth of each F-35 is produced in the UK, with BAE manufacturing the jet's rear fuselage, vertical and horizontal tails and wing tips.

BAE are also responsible for the fuel system, crew escape, life support and ensuring the Lightning II operates seamlessly with HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales.



● The USMC squadron VM-FAT 501 is to demonstrate the new F-35B Lightning II at RIAT this summer

Picture: Liz Kaszynski, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics



Massive task for super tug

THIS is the super tug currently being built to help the Navy's biggest warships into and out of Portsmouth.

Arriving in the city early next year – ahead of the maiden entry by carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth – this is the small, but powerful craft which will be vital to guiding the 65,000-tonne leviathan in and out of harbour and on and off the wall at the new Princess Royal jetty.

Support firm Serco – who operate the tugs and harbour vessels used by the RN in Portsmouth, Faslane and Devonport – has commissioned Dutch firm Damen to provide it with a tug.

The shipbuilders are modifying their proven ART (Advanced Rotor Tug) 80-32 design, in use in harbours and ports around the globe, specifically to meet the requirements of the two new carriers, including fitting a folding mast so the boat can work safely under the overhanging flight decks.

The 107ft craft is designed with a bollard pull – the standard rate of measurement in tugboat world – of 84 tonnes; standard tugs are measured at 50 tonnes, those working with large commercial vessels at 60-65 tonnes.

"This fantastic new tug will play a very important role at the naval base, and the team eagerly await her arrival," said Serco Marine Service's business operations

manager Iain MacLeod.

Details of the tug emerged as the very first of 3,000 compartments on Queen Elizabeth was handed over to the crew.

With the 65,000-tonne ship due to sail later this year, and the ship's company due to move on board even sooner, bit by bit compartments will be transferred to the sailors to turn QE into a living, breathing working warship.

The first – 9J – is a logistics compartment, but will serve as a temporary training facility in the short term for Damage Control Officer Lt Cdr John Ball.

For those of you who know your warship layouts, 9J is very deep in the bowels (eight decks down from the flight deck) and roughly midships (compartments are labeled A to Z bow to stern).

The handover comes just a couple of days after the first of the (eventual) 679-strong ship's company joined QE's younger sister Prince of Wales across Rosyth dockyard.

Some of the inaugural dozen – all officers and senior ratings (there are no junior rates yet, so no cap tallies) – have shuffled across from the Prince's older sister Queen Elizabeth, fitting out in the inner basin at Rosyth, a proverbial stone's throw from where the second ship is rapidly taking shape.

Leading the RN involvement on both is Capt Simon Pettit, Senior Naval Officer of HMS Queen Elizabeth for the past three years – and now in charge of the small team assigned to her sister as well (QE's first CO, Cdre Jerry Kyd, takes command later this year).

"This is Day 1 for the men and women who will serve in HMS Prince of Wales and I wish them every success in their journey," said Capt Pettit.

'Let's put on an even greater show'

THE Navy's senior sailor wants the debut of HMS Queen Elizabeth in her home of Portsmouth next year to become an iconic moment seared into the city's – and nation's – memory akin to the raising of the Mary Rose nearly 35 years ago.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas has laid down the gauntlet to civic and business leaders, schools, and naval veterans to provide an unforgettable welcome for the 65,000-tonne carrier.

Given the size of the ship – the largest ever built for the RN – and the UK's investment in her, plus her sister HMS Prince of Wales and the F-35 jets which will fly from their decks, the Queen Elizabeth's maiden entry into Portsmouth is likely to be an event of national – and possibly international – significance.

"Thirty-three years ago millions watched the wreck of Henry VIII's flagship Mary Rose rise from the

seabed," the admiral said.

"My challenge to Portsmouth – and for the Royal Navy – is to put on an even greater show. Let's make it a day to remember – let's make sure that in 50 years' time, people in Portsmouth still talk about the day they were given off school to see this 65,000-tonne giant arrive."

In the final stages of completion at Rosyth, HMS Queen Elizabeth is due to go to sea for contractor trials later this year. She'll return to the Forth once those are done for a final period of fitting out, tweaks and testing by both the Aircraft Carrier Alliance and ship's company, and is due to provide an imposing backdrop at the naming ceremony for HMS Prince of Wales before she heads south to her future home.

"Thousands of people will flock to Southsea and Old Portsmouth to see her arrive," Admiral Zambellas continued.

"Millions more will watch on TV – and not just in the UK. Images of the ship – and the city – will be seen in Washington and Beijing, Delhi and Sydney. Portsmouth will have a ringside seat and a global audience for this historic day."

Cdre Kyd added: "The arrival of HMS Queen Elizabeth into Portsmouth for the first time will be both momentous and historic."

"As her commanding officer, it will be a very special day indeed and I am deeply privileged to be the first captain with the honour of bringing the great carrier into her home port for the very first time – I just hope the weather is good!"

Around £100m is being invested in Portsmouth Naval Base – improving the jetties, dredging the main harbour channel, buying new tugs, fenders, sponsons, gangways, providing a high-voltage power supply, erecting navigational aids.

A FOREST of masts and funnels at jetties and quays on the south bank of the Forth with the iconic rail crossing in the background.

These are the pens at Port Edgar, home to torpedo boat destroyers – identifiable are HMS Patrician (GA1), and Seafire (G68) – in the second half of the Great War.

Our trip in time with the photographic historians at the Imperial War Museum takes us back to 1918 or 1919...

...but actually we're interested in this very month 100 years ago, and what was going on two miles diagonally across the Forth in Rosyth.

For Port Edgar – known as HMS Columbine in WW1 and HMS Lochinvar for most of its WW2 and post-war existence, was something of a satellite to the much larger Royal Dockyard over the water.

And in March 1916, that base became fully operational – the culmination of more than a dozen

years' work creating a dockyard out of nothing so the RN could meet the threat posed by the German Navy.

Back in 1903, the government set aside £3,250,000 (about £3bn today) to convert just shy of 600 hectares of land and waterfront (about 2.3 square miles or slightly smaller than present-day Devonport) into a base suitable of accommodating more than 20 battleships if necessary.

Having completed the preparatory work – which included a new rail line into the proposed site – the firm of Easton Gibb and Son set to work on the new royal dockyard: a main basin, two dry docks, supporting workshops, power and pumping stations, warehouses and stores in 1909, with a deadline of completion in 1916.

So when war broke out in August 1914, Rosyth was still a 'work in progress' – but became a key 'forward operating base' (in modern parlance) for Admiral Beatty's battle-cruisers

and, later, the super-dreadnoughts of the 5th Battle Squadron, while the bulk of the Grand Fleet's capital ships anchored in the more distant natural harbour at Scapa Flow.

It took a workforce 6,000 strong to carve a base out of nothing (the rocks at Dhu Craig were dynamited to make way for the locks); around 1,000 of them were housed in a temporary village on Hilton Road comprising prefabricated corrugated iron huts dubbed 'tin town' by locals.

In time, the tin huts would be replaced by a new town; Rosyth was built following 'garden city' principles – locals used to sign off postcards 'Rosyth Garden City' in the same way inhabitants of Welwyn did.

So the houses – 1,700 in total when construction was completed – would have front and back gardens. The streets were wide tree-lined boulevards. There was plenty of open space, sporting facilities and local

amenities. Nothing new in 2016. A revelation a century ago... so much so that Edinburghers paid day trips to marvel at this model community.

The first tenants of the garden city homes – all dockyard workers, many of whom had transferred from other naval bases – moved in during the momentous month of May 1916.

By then, the huge inner basin – about 30 times the size of the pitch at Wembley and 30ft deep – plus the locks linking it with the Forth was finally ready for use.

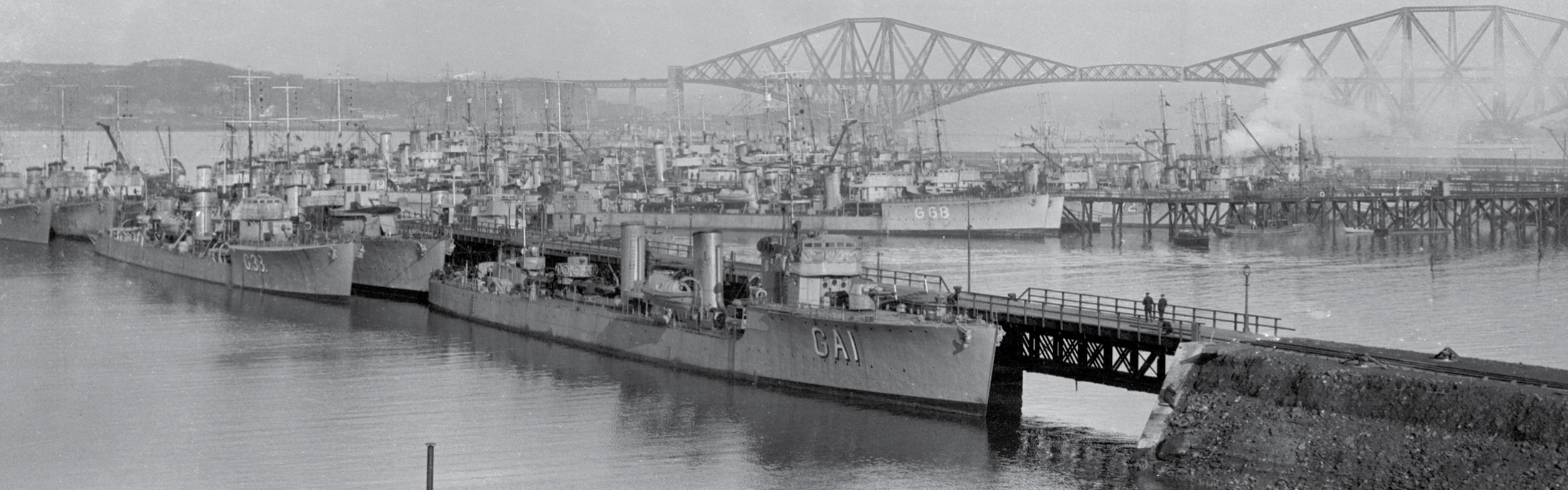
Depot ship Crescent, a converted cruiser, was the rather unglamorous vessel sent into the basin (occupied in 2016 by carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth in the final stages of fitting out), on March 17 followed by the pre-dreadnought battleship Zealandia 11 days later which became the inaugural ship to enter dry dock (neither event evidently recorded by the Navy's official cameramen, sadly).

In little more than two months' time the dry dock facilities would be heavily in use with ships needing repair after the battering they received at Jutland (HMS Warspite, which took quite some punishment, was the first vessel to make use of the entrance lock).

After the hustle and bustle and massive investment of the war years, peace brought a dramatic fall in work for the yard. By 1921, workers were on short time and by 1925 the Admiralty decided their once-pivotal base was no longer needed and the site was mothballed.

Only when the threat of a resurgent German Navy reappeared in 1938 was it brought back into use.

■ This photograph (IWM Q73847) is one of more than ten million held by the Imperial War Museum. They can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@IWM.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



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A Raleigh good show

LEARNING at HMS Raleigh is not limited to the trainees, as members of a TV production crew discovered.

As the crew from Twofour filmed the progress of trainees, they were also undergoing a subtle process of marinisation themselves.

Such was the depth of research into the establishment that some left Cornwall talking a new lingo – Series Producer Naomi Gayler said: “They kept talking about scrán [Naval slang for food] and saying ‘Happy?’ at the end of sentences...”

The result of that research is *Royal Navy School*, currently mid-run on Channel 4 (episodes available on the channel’s catch-up service – see www.channel4.com/programmes/catchup) but well over a year in gestation.

After negotiations between the company and the Royal Navy were completed, two Directors arrived at Raleigh last March to familiarise themselves with Navy training.

Lt Cdr Andy Mills, one of the RN’s liaison officers, said: “There was an eight-week period when Directors Will Jessop and Clare Cameron watched earlier classes going through training.

“They just immersed themselves – I remember Clare doing stretcher runs, for example. “It was a huge leap of faith for us, letting two civilians sit in on class, but they got to know people by name.”

The pair produced copious notes to guide the summer’s filming.

Lt Cdr Mills said there was a good deal of preparation work for staff as well – a lesson learned from the 2014 Twofour documentary series *Royal Marines: Commando School*, where the spotlight fell on the trainers as much as on the trainees.

The main message to staff was ‘carry on as normal’ – “the staff here are all jolly Jacks – chirpy and, I think, smart, professional and caring. Real 21st Century,” said Lt Cdr Mills.

Back-stories were picked up – common links, perhaps, or family connections with the Naval Service – and the requirements of filming were explained to individual trainees.

To minimise disruption to the establishment the Twofour team followed two overlapping classes for five weeks over June and July.

One covered the first five weeks of one ten-week course

● (Right) Setting up the Gallery and the Machine Central Room, and (below) filming on Dartmoor

Pictures: Lt Cdr Andy Mills

(Fisher), the other the final five weeks (Cornwell), including the passing-out parade.

Daily briefings were held between the crew and key Raleigh staff, including Raleigh Commander Cdr Sean Brady, Training Commander Cdr Jo Adey and OC Initial Naval Training Lt Cdr Freddie Fox.

These meetings allowed TV staff to plan their days, and to get maximum benefit from the considerable array of technology they brought to Torpoint.

While some training was inevitably filmed by five ‘portable single camera’ crews on hand-held cameras – Dartmoor, Jupiter Point and Pier Cellars, for example – much of the 1,500 or so hours of footage was gathered by ‘the Rig’, an installation of 70 camera positions around classrooms, mess spaces and dormitories.

A total of 53 cameras were rotated around the positions depending on the day’s activities, and some 50 production team were on location at various times, including producers, directors, sound crew, camera operators, vision engineers, ingest operators, riggers and runners.

“Every day there’s a timetable for our filming, running alongside the characters’ stories, to capture both recruits and staff,” said Naomi.

“Why the Royal Navy? Well, they had a very successful Royal Marines series – it rated really well.

“Both the channel and the Services were happy with it, so there was a good relationship from that series.

“TV channels and production companies are always looking for great locations. There is also a fascination for ‘access documentaries’ – hospitals, shops and so on.

“So when we have got the opportunity to film in a very big institution or very big company we have got a rich selection of characters and stories.

“There is naturally-occurring

action every day.

“I have previously worked on 24 hours in A and E, a rig show when you have cameras on the walls, so we didn’t need a cameraman or director.

“You observed human life without interfering.

“We are not intruding. People are more natural – they are less aware of the camera.

“You get a more honest and true picture of people’s lives.

“And we do not put people in situations here – they are already here. We basically follow life in hospital, just like we follow the course.

“Clare and Will were here since March. With this type of access documentary so much is based on good relationships with people, especially when you are in a place that is very big and there are a lot of people to check with before you do things.”

Lt Cdr Mills said doors were rarely closed to the crew: “When they asked if they could film, the answer was always ‘yes’ – so long as the question was reasonable.”

All footage from the Rig fed into the Gallery, one of a linked pair of portable cabins on a patch of grass between two blocks

In the gloomy interior the feeds from the rig cameras and from 50 radio microphones, as well as fixed ‘atmospheric’ mikes, are monitored by up to 14 people in shifts of up to ten hours.

A bank of screens at one end are scrutinised for key camera shots, while ‘loggers’ record activities to help shape the final edit.

The other shed – the ‘Machine Control Room’ or MCR – provides technical support and storage; the whole operation was linked by around 7.5km of cabling.

Naomi, who with Series Director Chris Rowe ran the team on location, continued: “We lived in the wardroom, ate scrán at the Victory Galley – we very much felt settled at Raleigh.

“I think there’s a real warmth about the place – there are obviously a lot of rules to follow and ways that people are expected to behave.

“But I think it’s a very friendly place; people have been very

helpful.

“We will show the rules and discipline and the importance of being taught that discipline, but I think all the staff have a real warmth and humour, both to us and to the recruits.

“It’s something we are keen to show – it’s something about the place.

“We see the recruits getting told off, but also when they get support; whether in kit musters or emotional support we have seen divisional staff being incredibly supportive, and I suspect for some of the young recruits they still need to play a parental role.

“We enjoyed our time at Raleigh. Without the help of everybody, from the Commander and Captain to everyone in the divisions, they facilitated what we did every day.

“Our job would have been very hard if people had not been as understanding.”

Cdr Brady said that the aims of the two sides were compatible – Twofour wanted to produce a good TV programme and the staff at Raleigh wanted to show the Navy in the best light.

Filming was not allowed to impinge on normal business at Raleigh, which is also home, *inter alia*, to the RN Submarine School and to Phase 2 and specialist training in logistics and seamanship.

“Twofour were concentrating on two courses but the other courses were getting on with their normal routine,” said Cdr Brady.

“There were around 280 other people still going through the school at the same time, and our concern was for them as well.”

Courses usually have 60 trainees, but the attrition rate of the featured courses was a little higher than average – most finish



● Filming the Cornwall passing-out parade

with numbers in the high 40 or 50s.

“Every now and then you get classes going through where you lose more people – a bout of sickness, injuries, people not meeting the required standards – and all the reasons people leave training are in the classes featured, Cornwall in particular,” said Cdr Brady.

There was no RN veto on material in the documentary, but a viewing process to check correct context and factual accuracy took place during the edit process.

As for the show’s reception, Cdr Brady said: “There could be some criticism from those within and across the Service, and they

may be the harshest.

“But the programme is not aimed at us – it is aimed at the general public to show that when their son or daughter arrives at HMS Raleigh they will be tested and also supported.”

Two other documentaries with a strong Naval element are also being broadcast at the moment.

A WAG TV series entitled *Devonport: Life in the Dock* was due to begin its run on Quest channel as *Navy News* went to press, while BBC 2’s *Sea Cities* series featured both Portsmouth and Plymouth in last month’s episodes, which are available on the BBC’s online catch-up services.



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Dawn patrol



Pictures: Gordon Elias



● Sub Lt Ali Sedgeworth and Sub Lt Dev Chowdhury plan a flight

Navy pilots take first s

THEY are 167 miles from RNAS Yeovilton, 289 miles from RNAS Culdrose and 155 miles from Portsmouth.

They are in Lincolnshire. At RAF Cranwell to be exact.

The base is well away from the Wildcats, Merlins and – for the exceptional – the F-35Bs they will eventually pilot, but 703 NAS plays a key role in the future manning of the Fleet Air Arm's aircraft.

It is here that the young Royal Navy officers undertake their elementary flying training in Grob Tutor aircraft.

Following flying grading at 727 NAS at Yeovilton, they spend three or four months (the weather plays a huge part in the flying timetable) at Cranwell, where they are streamed to fly helicopters – continuing their training at RAF Shawbury – with the lucky few picked for the Lightning II fast-jet programme, in which case they head to RAF Linton-on-Ouse to fly the Tucano and then on to RAF Valley to fly the Hawk.

While at Cranwell life centres around the large crewroom, part of an assortment of buildings at the edge of the sprawling camp, home to No3 Flight Training School. 703 – motto *Experientia docet* (experience teaches) – also shares with East Midlands Universities Air Squadron.

Winter in the flat south Lincolnshire countryside can be harsh, with adverse weather quickly resulting in the daily flying programme being wiped out – with students groaning as their flight slots are crossed out on the crewroom's TV.

Spirits are kept high with the constant rivalry over Uckers and the throwing of giant dice to decide who makes the wets. Sub Lt Rhod Leyshon graduated from 703 at the end of January and was going straight to Shropshire to continue his helicopter training with 705 NAS at Shawbury.

"I've really enjoyed the training, squadron life is great. I arrived at ground school in July and didn't get to fly until October but now I'm flying twice a day," he said.

"Every time you fly it is harder than doing your driving test, you want to do your best so you do get a bit nervous.

"Originally I wanted to be a flight observer but at grading I was told I'm pilot material," said Rhod, who harbours a dream of flying a Junglie Merlin for Commando Helicopter Force.

Sub Lt Ali Sedgeworth only had six or seven hours of his 56-hours in the Grob but was looking to a future with the nation's new aircraft carriers.

"I'm from Edinburgh and have watched

the Queen Elizabeth being built," he said.

"I was onboard HMS Illustrious when she visited Rosyth and we thought she was big; when we saw Queen Elizabeth we couldn't believe the size of her, I would be so proud to serve in her."

Ali admits he harboured a long-time dream of becoming a pilot.

"When you are a kid you watch films like *Top Gun* and think that's what you would like to do and now I have the reality of making that happen.

"The Navy was always my first choice as I genuinely love being at sea."

Colleague Sub Lt Dev Chowdhury also dreams of landing an aircraft on the deck of HMS Queen Elizabeth.

"I would love to serve in her, I think she is something we can genuinely be proud of."

Dev joined the Royal Navy following an internship at AugustaWestland in Yeovil.

"I got the chance to go to RNAS Yeovilton and I spoke to the commanding officer of 815 NAS and got really interested in flying from there," he said.

"I am enjoying Cranwell; it is in the middle of nowhere but the atmosphere is great.

"It is like staying in university halls with all your mates along the corridor."

In 2011 703 NAS began observer





Steps towards career on front line

training as part of the new UK Military Flying Training System (UKMFTS).

Observers undertake ground school and around 20 hours flying over three months before continuing their training at 750 NAS at RNAS Culdrose.

Among the current intake was Lt Ross Gallagher, who opted for observer training as part of his specialisation.

"I've always had an interest in aviation and jumped at the chance to do this," said Ross, who joined the Royal Navy in 2011 and has served in HMS Kent and HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Ali, along with colleagues Dev, Sub Lt Mark Hanson and Sub Lt George Day, were all due to graduate from the squadron this month and all harboured dreams of flying jets.

"My dad was a PO maintainer at CHF and he got me interested in joining the Navy," said George.

Mark added: "I'll admit that the RAF was my first choice but I am glad I ended up in the Navy. I am hoping to see more of the world with the RN."

But first they have to get through Cranwell.

As CO Lt Cdr Adam Jones, explains: "703 is the first formal

stage of military flight training after grading at 727 and this Tri-Service establishment sets them up for life.

"The contacts they make now will stand them in good stead throughout their careers.

"I was here in 1997, course 3 Long, and I still speak to the RAF colleagues I was studying with.

"We are part of No 3 Flight Training School and there is a healthy sense of camaraderie and rivalry with 57 RAF and 674 Army Air Corps but the output is the same.

"At 703 we aim to embed the naval ethos and ensure our students get the right training.

"It is a real privilege to work with enthusiastic people. If anything we have to temper the students' enthusiasm to focus their efforts."

While the majority of students go on to fly helicopters, many initially harbour a longing to be selected for the F-35B Lightning II stealth fighter.

But the former 771 NAS Search-and-Rescue squadron pilot is under no pressure to provide jet pilots.

"The exceptional select themselves. There is no quota for fast jets. If a student shows an aptitude

for fast jet then we stream them for that specialisation.

"These are exciting times for the Fleet Air Arm and Royal Navy – they are on the up and up.

"The students see the new aircraft types, the Queen Elizabeth-class of ships and realise they are joining with maritime aviation as a focus for defence."

On each course of up to six students, work begins with ground school, with flying time gradually increasing until the pilots are flying twice a day in the last few weeks of their course.

Until last summer 703 NAS was based a few miles away at RAF Barkston Heath but moved out to allow the site to be upgraded.

But it is to the airfield's three runways that students return during their training as the skies around Cranwell are busy, unsurprisingly for a county packed with RAF bases.

Contractors Babcock provide up to 20 Grob 115E Tutor aircraft each day. The combination of docile handling characteristics and good performance make it very suitable for a training role.



It's still an analogue aircraft with its numerous dials but is due to be replaced by an updated digital version in 2017 under the UKMFTS contract.

The two-seater, with the instructor taking the left-hand position, can fly at up to 10,000ft, depending on what is being taught and practiced.

Lt Rod Royce is one of the 11 or so instructors, evenly split between military and civilian pilots in order to give students a wealth of experience.

His 12 years in the Senior Service have included deployments to Libya and Afghanistan, flying Lynx Mk7 and 9a for 847 NAS and on exchange with 657 Army Air Corps at RAF Odiham.

"I spent three years training for fixed-wing aircraft so I have a fair idea of what is required," he said.

"What makes a good jet pilot is complete consistency and reliability. You haven't got the benefit of an observer or aircrewman so a single-seat pilot has to be most consistent."

Lt Royce, who has been at 703 NAS for around eight months, added: "When I went from single seat to operating in a crew environment I found it quite a challenge but you become used to the teamwork

involved with a crew and when it works well it is satisfying.

"On an ideal day I will fly at least a couple of times. The whole cycle takes around two-and-a-half to three hours.

"During the early trips I will brief them 90 minutes before take off, then we will fly for 45 minutes to an hour, land, and finish with a 20-minute debrief and then I'm off to write my report.

"An instructor flies a lot in the early sorties but as soon as you have taught them a skill they do it from then on."

Training includes learning, spinning, aerobatics, flying in the circuit, including the student's first solo, and later navigation and formation flying which builds up to a solo formation trip.

"This helps students develop their captaincy and airmanship and gives them confidence for making decisions.

"I take a lot of satisfaction from taking someone who has never flown before and turning them into a pilot."

■ *Read about the Royal Navy at RAF Valley in April's edition of Navy News.*



● Sub Lt Rhod Leysham returns from a flight with CO Lt Cdr Adam Jones





Parrot alley

IF ONLY we had the strains of Ennio Morricone to accompany this great shot of a Mexican stand-off. In the Netherlands.

A Bagger goes head-to-head with an F-16 Fighting Falcon of the Royal Netherlands Air Force's 322 Squadron on the tarmac at Leeuwarden; it looks like the Sea King will pass the Dutchie on the left hand side (it's actually a bit of *trompe l'oeil*... or *optische illusie* if you're from the Netherlands).

Anyway...

The Royal Navy's eyes in the sky swapped freezing Helston for Frisian Holland (which was also freezing) and a two-week winter workout to re-learn the art of controlling fast jets over the grey wastes of the ocean – embodied by the North Sea, just 15 miles from the Dutch air base.

With carriers HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales about to enter service, the air and ground crews of 849 need to both find their sea legs again and rejuvenate more traditional skills ahead of the successor to the Airborne Surveillance and Control Sea Kings – the Merlin 'Crows Nest' (which is a grey Merlin with a big sack on the side for the specialist radar) – joining the Fleet Air Arm.

The latest variant of the Baggers – the name comes from that distinctive sack – were introduced 15 years ago to provide airborne early warning for carrier task groups and to allow the observers in the rear of the Sea King to direct friendly jets and helicopters on to targets, but have spent the bulk of their career over Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Brits were thrown straight into Exercise Skinners Gold (which featured neither skimmers nor gold), with the emphasis initially on night flying and monitoring 'enemy' jets encroaching friendly airspace.

And the second week was spent flying by day and directing the Polly Greys – the Dutch F-16 squadron owes its nickname to a stuffed parrot and some jolly japes when stationed in England in WW2 shooting down V1 flying bombs – to intercept foes; the observers got in 12 hours of live fighter control with 322 – motto *niet praten maar doen*, or actions speak louder than words.

Those dozen hours of live action were eye-opening for the observers who got to play with up to ten fourth-generation strike fighters simultaneously (the Harrier was third generation, the Fleet Air Arm's incoming F-35 stealth fighters are fifth generation), while the pilots learned a considerable amount about the abilities of their fellow aircrew and the hi-tech equipment in the rear of a 40-year-old helicopter.

The exercise closed with an awards ceremony which saw Lt Paul Cataffo receive the De Koo Trophy as the best fighter control student.

"The exercise was a great success. The squadron fostered a great working relationship with 322 Squadron, who were the consummate professionals, and excellent hosts," pilot Lt Jim Carver said.

"We very much look forward to returning to the Netherlands to build on the skills and lessons learned."

Members of the detachment used the final weekend to visit the war memorials at Arnhem – the site of the final airborne assault to seize the Rhine crossings in September 1944 as part of Operation Market Garden – immortalised in print and on celluloid by *A Bridge Too Far*.

"The aircrew as a whole were thrilled to experience flying over the continent – many of us had never detached to the Netherlands so the trip was of cultural benefit as well as professional benefit," said pilot Lt James Neave.

The 500-mile journey home gave the pilots the opportunity to sharpen their formation-flying skills and the challenge of negotiating the airspace around London.



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pictures: laet william barrett, palembang flight



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Police to Reggies – and back

REGGIES. Jaunties. Jossmen. Crushers.

Many names, and many guises for the men and women who help maintain order in the Royal Navy – long known as the Regulating Branch, more recently (once again) as the Royal Navy Police.

The branch has undergone several changes in title over the centuries, during which time its members have elicited a mixed response from sailors – fear, respect and contempt often amongst them.

The roots of the RN Police stretch deep into the history of the Senior Service, at least as far back as the 17th Century.

While a ship was at sea, the commanding officer was the monarch's representative, and his right-hand man was the first lieutenant.

He, in turn, relied on the 'ship's marshals' and a team of 'ship's corporals' to maintain law and order.

Ship's marshals were abolished and the Master At Arms (MAA) rate was introduced in about 1699, a title still found in the Royal Navy in 2016.

From the earliest days, the MAA, as a ship's policeman, had a number of roles to fulfil.

The most obvious was to ensure that discipline was upheld and punishment carried out as decreed by the Captain.

The MAA supervised sentries, was accountable for the duties of the ship's corporals, was in charge of the guard and ensured the ship's company was adept in the use of small arms.

He also patrolled the ship in mid-evening to check for drunkenness and to make sure all lanterns and fires were out – a crucial task in wooden warships.

The introduction of the Divisional system in 1918 almost



● Tugg's view of the legendary nightmare Reggie

dealt the branch a fatal blow – there was a sense that it was in a terminal decline and potential candidates avoided it.

With the situation becoming critical, opinion was canvassed

NAVY News will be looking at the role of the Royal Navy Police in future editions – here we delve back into the history of the branch.

among senior officers, and most declared that there was still a definite need for an experienced MAA to bind the ship's company together, particularly in times of war when ship's companies were a mix of volunteers and conscripts.

A recommendation to rename the Ship's Police as the Regulating Branch to more clearly reflect its duties prompted the Admiralty to abolish the former and introduce the latter, consisting of MAAs and Regulating POs.

In late 1944 there were further reforms to address problems in the maintenance of discipline on shore in the main Naval port areas; a Provost organisation was set up and the rank of Leading Patrolman introduced – shore patrols by POs and Leading

Hands were seen as unpalatable (especially when taking action against a messmate), overtaking and a form of punishment.

At the same time training, which had been carried out locally, was centralised at Beechwood Camp in Devon, though the new RN Regulating School moved several times in short order; in 1946 to Fort Wallington near Portsmouth, the next year to HMS Cicero in Essex, and again the following year, to HMS Excellent, where it remained until November 2005.

By that time Leading Patrolmen had been renamed Leading Regulators (1968).

Cultural changes in the British population brought the need for a specialist 'drugs squad'

cadre, which developed essential expertise in their field (an educational team was also created in the Regulating School).

The basic structure for this element was in place by the late 1960s.

MOD (Navy) also instigated the creation of a Special Investigation Branch within the Senior Service – essentially a detective section, and one that was probably long overdue, as the sister Services had long had such branches.

1984 saw the introduction of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) and in 1990 all Regulators were classed as Service Police, though the term Regulator remained in common use.

In 2005 the MOD decided that there should be a tri-Service police training establishment, housed at the former HMS Dryad site at Southwick, north of Portsmouth, known as the Defence School of Guarding and Policing.

The khaki and light blue schools duly upped sticks and moved in alongside the Navy version, bringing their history (in the form of museums) with them.

The Armed Forces Act of 2006 saw the title Regulating Branch consigned to history the following year, and the return of the RN Police – a full turn of the circle.

But the old monikers still have currency.

According to Rick Jolly's *Jackspeak*, 'jaunty' comes from the French *gentilhomme* (gentleman-at-arms) and refers to a position rather than the person, while 'crusher' refers to the soft-soled shoes worn by ship's corporals – the only way you could hear their approach was by the sound of cockroaches being crushed underfoot...

For a fuller history, see the Regulating Branch and RN Police Association website (www.rba93.com).

Sea King new employment at Culdrose



Picture: PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow

HALF-WAY through its transformation from veteran lifesaver to iconic landmark, this is the Sea King which will greet anyone heading down the main road to the Lizard from the end of this month.

No longer required by the nation with the end of military search and rescue duties, the Mk5 – XV673, call sign 827 – will be mounted on a plinth just inside the Culdrose fence opposite Helston Cottage Hospital at the northern edge of the Cornish air station.

To prepare the helicopter for its final mission, RN engineers took it into the air base's 'spray bay' – 'a garage with a difference', helping to ensure that airframes are fit to fly.

A seven-strong team, led by Mark Thompson, spent a fortnight painstakingly stripping back the airframe, then re-painting it in its final 771 NAS livery.

"Once we got our hands on the airframe, we sanded it down, re-primed it and then painted it back to its original state."

"It is always emotive when a squadron decommissions, and it will be especially so when we say goodbye to 771."

"That is why I am so glad to have been involved in this project because of the impact that this aircraft has had on Cornwall and beyond."

Martin Hunt was responsible for ensuring that the aircraft was faithful to the original.

"What we have done is just like re-spraying a car, but this vehicle is a bit bigger – and a lot more important," he said.

"I got a copy of the helicopter's aircraft original drawings, and it was my job to make sure that the aircraft met that standard; everything from the paint colours, to the numbers and lettering."

When not undergoing repairs or refurbishment at Fleetlands in Gosport, XV673 has spent pretty much its entire career at Culdrose.

It was delivered to Helston in 1970, served with 824 and 706 squadrons before being transferred to 771 in 2003.

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Marathon returns

THE Yeovil Marathon is returning for a second year at the Athletics Track, RNAS Yeovilton on June 12.

The event will be in aid of both the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and the Yeovilton Military Wives Choir.

"Last year the event raised £3,500 for the two charities and we would love to exceed that this year," said Bryn Phillips, event organiser and PO AET from RNAS Yeovilton.

There will be hot and cold food and drink available, various stalls, a bouncy castle and a children's fun run.

Sponsor Norseland Ltd will be

there with their Gourmet Food Wagon handing out toasties and free samples to all competitors and their families.

Bryn added: "The route was designed for both the faster runners and those that have never run a marathon before."

"It is predominantly flat and fast along country roads through the picturesque villages surrounding RNAS Yeovilton in the boroughs of Yeovil."

Entries are available via www.fullonsport.com

For more information about the event and for updates on the marathon visit www.yeovilmarathon.com



● Sailors use the new indoor climbing wall at HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth



● Irene in New York and in Buenos Aires



Piper entertains on world trek

BAGPIPER Irene Robinson has completed the fourth stop on her 50,000-mile adventure, Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina.

The stillness of the Plaza San Martin took Irene by surprise as she stood, with no movement in the air, ready to play her bagpipes.

People came nearer to watch and requested she play *A long way to Tipperary* to which she gladly obliged.

Irene said: "A man came over weeping because of the beauty of the music and a young boy told me that he thought I was amazing."

It is fantastic that, whilst raising money for charity, Irene is also spreading joy around the globe.

She kicked off her challenge at the iconic Radio City Music Hall in New York, the first of 12 worldwide locations she will be visiting.

The challenge is in an effort to raise £50,000 for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and Julia's House.

You can donate to her cause at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/bagpipetheworld> and follow her progress at <https://twitter.com/IrenePiping>

Only another 100 climbs to go boys

MORE than a dozen Royal Navy sailors at HMS Temeraire have kick-started an 'uphill' fundraising challenge that will see them conduct thousands of ascents of a new purpose-built indoor climbing wall to raise money for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

They will be joined by hundreds of HMS Temeraire's sailors, staff and trainees who will take turns to conduct as many as a 100 ascents of the new wall each – which combined with similar cycling, running, rowing and swimming efforts represent the 70 miles from the establishment that is home of Royal Navy sport to Twickenham Stadium – as part of the RNRMC's annual Road to Twickenham fundraising campaign.

This fundraising campaign challenges everyone – Service personnel and civilians, no matter their level of fitness – to travel the equivalent distance from their workplace, ship, unit or even local sports club to Twickenham before kick-off on the day of the big Army v Navy rugby fixture on April 30.

The ascents, and other associated sporting

activities will have to be completed by the sailors by then.

PO Tim Eckersley at HMS Temeraire said: "The climbing wall will have a massive impact as it will be available to everybody, incorporating climbing devices for the complete novice user, unsupervised, to advanced lead climbers, including Royal Navy personnel on-board front line ships rotating and operating from Portsmouth as well as those serving in the area and their families."

"It will also incorporate features to lend its use to functional circuits, development of maritime skill sets and winter ice climbing."

"We are extremely thankful to the organisations that made this possible through a series of grants."

Commenting on the Road to Twickenham campaign, he said: "This was a great start to our Road to Twickenham campaign and we are keen to see everyone at HMS Temeraire get involved."

"We will be climbing, cycling, running and rowing to support the RNRMC and complete the 70 miles to the stadium."

Hillary Jukes, Regional Fundraiser at

RNRMC, said: "This will be the fourth year of the Road to Twickenham campaigning, which has not only proven to be extremely popular amongst Naval personnel but has also helped raise more than £20,000 for the charity."

"Last year our Servicemen and women were really creative, climbing ropes and taking on 'reverse jailbreaks' to make up their miles."

"This year we'd love to see the same initiative – and also see more entries from non-serving personnel."

"Royal Naval friends, families, ex-serving personnel and local businesses are equally welcome to join in, have fun, get fit and raise cash in the process."

The building of HMS Temeraire's new indoor climbing wall was possible thanks to a series of £34,000 grants awarded by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, the Royal Navy Sports Lottery and the Royal Navy's own Adventurous Training Fund.

The new facility will directly benefit Royal Naval personnel undertaking Naval Service Adventurous Training.

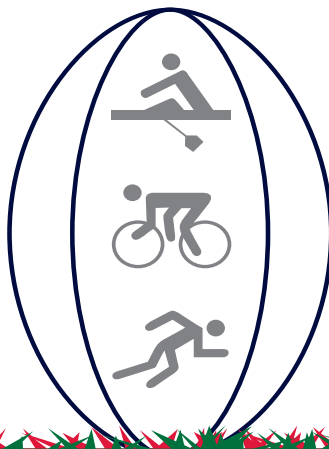
Drake hosts children

HMS Drake will once again offer Service children the unique opportunity to experience the UK's favourite sport – activity camps run by Kings Camps and subsidised by the RNRMC.

Kings Camps are the leading provider of holiday sports and activity day camps for children and work closely with many Naval communities across the UK.

As a charitable organisation, Kings Camps focuses on the experience of each child attending camp. With inspiring coaches, children experience a wide range of sports and activities whilst making new friends and developing a love for an active, healthy lifestyle.

You can see all of the programmes at www.kingscamps.org



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Your challenge is to cover the number of miles you are from Twickenham before the Army v Navy rugby game. For example, if you are based in Portsmouth, you could row 80 miles. If you are based in Lymington you could cycle 180 miles. You could do this individually or as part of a team, with your starting point being your unit, ship's current location or your affiliated town. Raising sponsorship will help your charity care for you, your family and oppos.

Register now and measure up to the challenge!
Search 'Road to Twickenham' on the Virgin Money Giving website or contact:
fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk T: 023 9387 1520

Registered charity in England and Wales (1117794) and Scotland (SC041898).

the road to TWICKENHAM

rnrmc.org.uk/events/roadtotwickenham



FUNDRAISER OF THE MONTH



HMS Ocean

THE Commanding Officer of HMS Ocean Capt Steve Moorhouse sat in a bath tub of gravy for three hours as part of the ship's ongoing charity fundraising effort.

Merger for two charities

THE Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund and the C Group have merged to create the Royal Marines Charity.

Both the RMCTF and The C Group have been hugely successful over the past three years, and whilst both charities have developed individual areas of expertise there are increasing areas of overlap.

Commandant General Royal Marines and President of the new charity Maj Gen Martin Smith said: "I am delighted to see the convergence of the RMCTF and the C Group to form the Royal Marines Charity, which has my absolute endorsement, and creates a unified charity to better serve our beneficiaries, Royal Marines and their families through life."

The creation of the charity will:

- Increase the ability to assist beneficiaries through improved fundraising, transition, benevolence and grant-making;
- Create a single point of contact for requests from beneficiaries;
- Create a single point of contact for support from benefactors;
- Inspire stronger engagement with the Corps' family and the support network;
- Provide a platform for increased membership of the Royal Marines Association;
- Create stronger links with civil society; and,
- Create a unified brand with significant profile and credibility, fit to serve the Corps.

Engineers work it out

MEDICS and a charity which helps families in the Plymouth area coping with children with diabetes are £500 better off thanks to RN engineers.

Various social events by the Royal Navy Engineers Quart Club (so called because serving and retired engineer officers get together and discuss fundraising activity over a quart of ale...) generated the cash, which was handed over by Cdr David McKenzie to Dr Becky Smith, consultant paediatrician at Derriford Hospital, the diabetes nursing care team, representatives from the Children's Diabetic Trust and recently-formed Sugar Zappers group, which supports around 200 families in the Plymouth area.

"My grandson has been diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. It really is a life-changing condition. The help and support we received from the Children's Diabetic Trust and Plymouth Sugar Zappers has been invaluable in helping our family through some fairly difficult times," said David.

Besides Plymouth, the Quart Club has branches in Portsmouth, Bath, Bristol and London.

Veterans set for raceday

COMBAT Stress, the veterans' mental health charity, is hosting a second fundraising raceday later this year.

The first Families and Armed Forces Race Day raised more than £50,000 last year.

The Jockey Club and Wincanton Racecourse will host the second day on Sunday October 23.

For details about the charity visit www.combatstress.org.uk.

Marines aim to conquer

FIVE Royal Marines scarred mentally and physically by the horrors of war over the past 25 years are attempting to scale Africa's highest mountain this month.

Alongside five police officers the serving and retired green berets hope to reach the 19,635ft (5,985m) summit of Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, raising money for the Royal Marines Charity – and raising awareness of battlefield injuries and battlefield-related stress in the process.

All five commandos attempting the Conquering Kili challenge have either been wounded in action or suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of the horrors they have witnessed.

WO2 Mark Stevens, currently serving at the Armed Forces Careers Office in Swansea, has twice been diagnosed with PTSD during a career in the Corps spanning nearly 30 years.

On peacekeeping duties in Bosnia back in 1993 he drove into a village in the midst of an ethnic cleansing action, and a decade later he witnessed eight comrades killed in action in Iraq when their helicopter crashed.

(On a lighter note, he was also behind the sell-out special RM edition of Monopoly produced for the Corps' 350th anniversary

year in 2014).

"Conquering Kili is about promoting disability awareness and recognising the impact of PTSD," said Mark.

"We are aiming to break down the barriers of this complex and debilitating condition, and encourage sufferers to open up and talk about this invisible disability."

Among these clambering up the mountain at his side is Cpl James Nightingale, who joined the Royal Marines in 1997, completed two tours of Afghanistan and received the Queen's Commendation for Bravery. He was injured by a gunshot wound to the face back in 2009 and has been working on his rehabilitation ever since – rehabilitation which has included representing the UK at the inaugural Invictus Games last year and reaching the North Pole as part of an expedition to the North Pole in April 2015.

That brought in more than £100,000 for the charity.

The goal for the African climb is (a) more modest (b) already achieved, as the team have smashed the £5k target they set...

...but that doesn't stop donations, which can be made via www.justgiving.com/65DN/ while the climbers' progress can be followed via www.65degreesnorth.co.uk.



Nelson UPO's bags of sacks appeal

THIS might look like the messiest kit muster you've ever seen... but it's actually a display of generosity by personnel and civilians who live/work in Portsmouth Naval Base.

The team at Nelson UPO decided they wanted to do something for Britain's homeless and signed up to the Rucksack Project, a nationwide scheme helping those who sleep rough during the colder months.

They hoped to fill six rucksacks with clothing (hence the name of the initiative) and take it down to The Lighthouse Centre in Southsea, putting up posters around the Nelson accommodation blocks, reminders on weekly orders...

...and a few weeks later they had 26 rucksacks worth of items (plus one big box of other donations) to help Pompey's homeless.

"To begin with it was a slow starter but after a couple of weeks the donations were flooding in – we were over the moon by the overwhelming response," said LWtr Lex O'Donnell.

"Everyone really pushed the boat out to help – not just the military but also our civilian counterparts. Some people also donated money which went on tins of soup, hats, gloves and scarfs."

After the inaugural success this winter, the Nelson UPO team intend to make the collection an annual event.



Handy for Dan

A FORMER Royal Marine turned sailing instructor has received a major boost thanks to a donation of vital equipment.

Dan Fielding was medically discharged from the Royal Marines in 2008 and now helps veterans affected by military operations by teaching them to sail.

A national charity helping Royal Marines transition into civilian life heard that Dan was using borrowed equipment and realised he needed the vital sailing kit to protect him against the elements.

The donation has allowed him to purchase crucial new kit, including a Musto waterproof jacket and trousers, mid-layer jacket, gloves, boots and a gilet.

He said: "The sailing kit I was using to teach beneficiaries was borrowed and only designed for short-term use."

"We sail all year round so having the right equipment is essential as it acts as your

safety equipment and provides protection from the elements. The new kit is high-grade and much more comfortable and means I can sail for longer distances."

Dan, 35, became involved with the Falmouth-based charity Turn to Starboard after deciding to use his own sailing experience to help other injured veterans.

He joined the organisation last year and helps injured Servicemen and women gain internationally recognised qualifications to help start new careers anywhere in the world.

The charity also offers sailing trips to Service families who have been affected by military operations.

Katharine Callus, of the Royal Marines Charity, said: "He is a different person since he has found a way to both do what he loves and earn a living, and we are delighted to have been able to help make that happen."

For more information visit www.turntostarboard.co.uk

Seafarers celebrate centenary

SEAFARERS UK will be celebrating its centenary next year.

Since being formed in 1917 as King George's Fund for Sailors, it remains the leading grant-making charity for the whole UK maritime sector, supporting seafarers across the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets.

Grants of £2.5 million per annum are awarded to 100-plus organisations that provide practical help and financial assistance for people in the maritime community, including vital funding for seafarers in need and their families – see www.seafarers.uk

Under the terms of its Royal Charter, Seafarers UK also encourages young people to consider a career at sea. That is why the charity works closely with the Sea Cadets and other organisations that offer opportunities for young people to gain maritime experience.

It is also the reason why Seafarers UK coordinates Seafarers Awareness Week June 20-26 – see www.seafarersweek.uk

During the week, Thursday June 23 is dedicated as Supporting Seafarers Day, when cash collections will be held at major railway stations around the UK.

Volunteers are required to receive donations from commuters and other train passengers. If you can spare an hour or two to help, please phone Hannah Scopp at Seafarers UK on 020 7932 0000 or email hannah.scopp@seafarers-uk.org

Rowers show their support

ROYAL Marines have shown their support to an all-amputee team currently rowing the Atlantic as part of the gruelling Talisker Whisky Rowing Challenge.

The Marines of 30 Commando IX GP, civil servants and members from Hasler Company rowed for 24 hours non-stop to show support and encouragement to the Row2Recovery team.

It is the first time that an all-amputee team has taken part in the Talisker Whisky Rowing Challenge.

The 123 participants who took part in the rowathon travelled a combined total of 687,000 metres and raised approximately £526 which will go to BLESMA, Endeavour Fund, Help4Heroes, Row2Recovery and RM Charities.

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Indian Summer

LIEUTENANTS Tom and Hamish Walker guide Joanna – HMS Defender's Lynx – on final approach to their destination in the Bay of Bengal.

The final final approach, in fact.

For the ship looming ever larger through the observer's window is one of the most famous in the recent annals of

the Royal Navy about to take her final bow.

Still she carries Sea Harriers. And still they reach for the skies via the ski ramp on the bow.

It was there, 34 years ago, that BBC correspondent Brian Hanrahan "counted them all out and I counted them all back" as Harriers struck at Argentine forces in the Falklands.

For the battleship grey outline a few hundred yards from the Lynx is HMS Hermes

– or rather was HMS Hermes, for the famous carrier has flown the Indian Ensign for the past three decades as the INS Viraat, now about to lower the flag for good.

Her farewell appearance at the Indian Navy's International Fleet Review gave the Royal Navy – in the form of Defender her Lynx helicopter flight and even one former crew member – the chance to say goodbye off the east coast port of

Visakhapatnam.

Known locally as 'Vizag' thanks to its tongue-twisting five syllables, the city of two million souls is home to the Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet – and the setting for the International Fleet Review.

Since 1953, the Indian Navy has hosted a review once during the term of office of the country's president. The 11th incarnation of the review proved to be the biggest yet.

More than 50 nations and nearly 100 warships accepted the invite.

Which, for Defender, meant a 2,500-mile passage from the Gulf, where she'd been supporting air strikes from the decks of FS Charles de Gaulle and USS Harry S Truman, across the Indian Ocean, a quick pit stop in Colombo, then up the east coast of the Sub-Continent to Vizag, where a 21-gun salute was waiting for

the destroyer from the Indian flagship INS Vikramaditya.

Defender anchored amid lines of warships off Visakhapatnam, flanked by American destroyers, Chinese and Japanese frigates, Sri Lankan patrol boats, Indian support ships and the grand old lady of the review, the 57-year-old carrier.

"Most of the ship's company had not seen so many warships

Continued overleaf





Continued from page 23

congregate. Defender stood proud and looked very impressive," said Lt Cdr Sean Trevethan, the destroyer's weapon engineer officer.

"The atmosphere at the review was electric. For us, it was a chance to celebrate being in the oldest and most professional navy in the world among some very capable young, up-and-coming, navies."

Sailors and Defender's Royal Marines detachment were ferried ashore to take

part in the opening ceremony which was a mix of Bollywood glamour and international acts, while a 30-strong Guard of Honour presented the official salute to President Pranab Kumar Mukherjee during a parade through the streets by personnel from more than two dozen of the participating nations.

Thousands of inhabitants of Visakhapatnam lined the entire 3½-kilometre parade route and cheered and clapped as the sailors passed.

"It had a bit of a carnival

atmosphere – everyone was really friendly and wanted to take photos of us with them," said warfare specialist Able Seaman Hannah Ebo. "It felt like being a celebrity."

It also felt a bit sticky. 30-plus Celsius. 70 per cent humidity. Hot. Sticky.

The formal review took place on the third day of the event, with President Pranab Mukherjee moving up and down the lines of warship in his official yacht while sailors on the warships manned and cheered ship – the latter shouts

possibly drowned out by the cacophony of Indian Navy jets and helicopters overhead.

In addition to pomp and ceremony, the Indians laid on an impressive dusk combat demonstration along the Visakhapatnam seafront featuring Harriers and MiG29 Fulcrums launched from the decks of the Indian Navy's two carriers, underwater explosions, a rocket and cannon attack by a Fulcrum and a fly past and hover by a Sea Harrier – all set against the backdrop of the ships in the review outlined by

thousands of white lights.

"It was an amazing show," said POET(WE) Mark Pollard. "It was really interesting to see the Indian Navy units in action."

Lt Cdr Trevethan added: "It served to whet the appetite of our younger sailors who are eagerly anticipating the arrival of our Queen Elizabeth-class."

"And seeing the Sea Harriers proved very nostalgic for our older crew members who'd served in our carriers."

There could be no better stirrer of old memories than the sight of the Viraat, 57 years

under the flags of two great navies, now about to pay off.

One former Hermes crewman – and, at 54, the oldest member of Defender's ship's company – seized the opportunity to look around his first vessel (see below), while 239 Flight became the very last aircrew to set a Fleet Air Arm aircraft down on her 740ft flight deck.

They flew Defender's CO Cdr Steve Higham aboard for a VIP tour of a ship which was laid down two weeks after D-Day. Not an anniversary of



Rolling back the years

YOU never forget your first ship. But nearly 40 years since you joined her, unless she's HMS Victory, you don't expect her to be still serving. As a rookie Ordnance Electrical Mechanic (OEM) – the equivalent of today's engineering technicians – Conrad 'Whiskey' Walker stepped aboard HMS Hermes in 1978 fresh from training. And 38 years later, the now 54-year-old Conrad, a chief petty officer aboard Defender – and the oldest member of the Type 45's ship's company (he'll thank us for saying that...) was invited aboard the veteran carrier at anchor off Visakhapatnam, where she was taking her bow at the Indian Navy's International Fleet Review.

Despite the many ships Conrad has served in since, his three years aboard

Hermes made her his favourite.

"It's a huge privilege to see her again. It's brought back lots of happy memories," he said.

"I hope the current crew have enjoyed their time on board as much as I did. I'm sure everyone will be sad to see her go."

He completed three deployments during his time on the Hermes, visiting the Mediterranean, USA, and Caribbean, during which time the carrier was fitted with a 'ski ramp' on the flight deck to help Sea Harriers get airborne, while Prince Andrew conducted some of his training as a junior officer – who was put to work by a young Conrad scrubbing out the engineering department.

"The work was really interesting – I was learning my trade as a baby mechanical engineer," said Conrad.

"The Hermes wasn't as automated as

modern ships so it was a more hands-on role for an engineer."

After exercises in Norway in 1981, Hermes encountered the worst weather Conrad has experienced in his near-40-year career in the Navy, with waves so high they were coming across the flight deck – and with enough force to sweep equipment overboard, including one of Hermes' landing craft.

"I remember being very scared, absolutely convinced the ship was going to sink," Conrad said. "We had sprung a leak at the front of the ship, so we were all working together to fix it and pump out the water."

That team spirit is what Conrad remembers most fondly from his time on Hermes.

"Everyone knew everyone on that ship. People were really friendly and always ready to help each other out. Two of my mates





D-Day. The real thing. 1944. Atlantic Wall. Sword Beach. Landing craft, Germans and all that.

"Viraat's ship's company were incredibly welcoming," said Cdr Higham. "It was a privilege to see a ship which has played such a vital role for both the Royal Navy, and the Indian Navy. It is a testament to our shared history and shows the value of continued co-operation between our two great countries."

Flight Commander Lt Hamish

Walker, Defender's Lynx pilot, added: "It has been a great honour to be the last Fleet Air Arm pilot to land on the ship. She holds a very important place in Royal Navy history, and in the memories of all those who have served on her, both British and Indian."

Viraat is now conducting a goodbye tour of Indian Navy bases before she officially decommissions. The plan is to turn her into a museum ship. Before all that, however, she had a final duty to perform at the Fleet Review...

... but not until the curtain had been officially brought down on the four-day spectacle.

The closing ceremony was every bit as colourful as the opener: lion-headed dancers from Indonesia, acrobatic drummers from Sri Lanka, jazz musicians from the USA and the Corps of Drums from the Indian Navy who would give the Royal Marines' drummers a very good run for their money. The bands combined talents at the end of the show for a unique joint performance.

That, said the commander

of the Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet Admiral S V Bhokare, epitomised celebration of peace and friendship between nations which the review embodied – and boded well for the future.

"That was illustrated by the fact that Defender's officers were sitting at a table with officers and sailors from China and Iran, sharing food and drink, applauding performances and, at the end, all trying to sing *Auld Lang Syne*," said the Rev Mike Meachin, the destroyer's chaplain. "It truly was a meeting

of nations."

Proceedings ended with a steam past as 27 ships – 15 of them Indian, led by the veteran Viraat – sailed in columns, at times only 400 yards apart, a challenging manoeuvre for any sailor, complicated by language difficulties given Bangladeshi, Malaysian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Burmese, Indonesian, Indian and British and American vessels were involved.

"It was a test of the skills and co-operation of all those involved and it went off without a hitch, providing a truly

impressive spectacle for all those lucky enough to witness it," said Cdr Higham.

"It was a great opportunity for Defender to offer her heartfelt thanks to the Indian Navy for their hospitality and generosity throughout the review."

His ship has now resumed her operations in the Gulf supporting French and American air strikes against the forces of Daesh in the Middle East by working with the carrier task groups of the FS Charles de Gaulle and USS Harry S Truman.



s, holding back the tears...

from the Hermes are still my best friends 35 years later."

The public will mostly remember the veteran carrier as the flagship of the Falklands task force back in 1982 (Conrad left her the previous year).

It was the highlight of an interesting career which began at the Vickers yard in Barrow in 1944... only for work to be halted 12 months later when World War 2 ended. Work resumed in the late 1950s and Hermes finally entered service in 1959 (total cost £19m – about £370m today).

Hermes subsequently served into the mid-1980s, but with the arrival of HMS Invincible, Illustrious and Ark Royal, Hermes was no longer needed and was sold to the Indians, as the Viraat with whom she's served faithfully for three decades. Not bad for a ship originally built with a 25-year lifespan in

mind.

Meanwhile at the Taj Mahal...

Defender's participation in the International Fleet Review allowed WO1 Lianne Evans to recreate a treasured family moment.

She made the 1,500-mile round trip from Visakhapatnam to Agra to follow in her father's footsteps.

All the way back in 1946, 22-year-old Glaswegian James 'Wee Jimmy' Rice paid the obligatory visit to the 17th Century mausoleum built by a mogul emperor mourning the death of his wife, sat on a bench with the iconic building in the distance and a colleague clicked away on his Box Brownie.

The Glaswegian served in the Army Corps of Signals in World War 2 and the immediate aftermath. His stint in the military included a

five-year spell in India.

'Wee Jimmy' left the Army long before Lianne came into this world, but she remembers the black and white photo from her childhood – as does her cousin in Canada who kept it in a family album.

There are a few more trees now – and considerably more tourists (it draws seven million visitors a year) – but otherwise the view of the Taj Mahal, hasn't changed over seven decades.

"I feel so lucky to have visited such a magical place," said the mother-of-two from Fareham in Hampshire.

"Knowing that my father was here all those years ago made it a very special moment indeed – and one that my family at home will love."



Pot of mash erupted like a volcano

AFTER I qualified as a clearance diver in 1953, my first draft was to the Home Fleet Diving team onboard MFV 1567, a 90ft ex-fishing trawler.

There were about 16 of us on board in two messes, one forward and one aft. The crew consisted of a couple of stokers, a sparker and two officers. The skipper was a Lt Cdr and we had a Sub Lt. The rest were divers, apart from the cook.

When the cook went on leave or had a weekend off one of us took over the cooking.

One Saturday I drew the short straw. However, as all sailors remember, Saturday was rounds day and dinner was always corned dog, pussers peas and mashed spuds.

The galley on the MFV was very small and consisted of a coal-burning stove and not enough room to swing a cat.

I stoked up the fire and looked at a large bag of spuds that needed peeling. I then noticed a large packet the same size as a cereal packet in the locker. Emblazoned in large numbers of print on the outside was the motif POM plus a load of instructions, amongst which I saw 'add to hot water'.

I boiled up a fanny of water and poured in the powder. It looked a bit weak so I poured in some more, even that didn't do it so in went some more. No change, so I emptied the packet.

I got on with another job when I heard a clang as the lid parted company with the pot and the mash started pouring out like Vesuvius. The mash was about a foot high. I should have taken the pot off the stove but I was knee deep in mash so I shoveled it over the side as fast as I could.

After the clean up I peeled the spuds. Dinner was a bit late.

What did I learn? Always read the instructions. PS: Thank you very much for my bottle of rum for the February letters page.

Jim Cannon
West Sussex



● Clockwise from top: HMS Raleigh aground at Labrador; the superstructure and the upper deck



Record of state of HMS Raleigh

REGARDING the letter from Mr Alan Mott in the February edition of *Navy News*.

I have the above photographs taken from my father's photo album of the wreck of HMS Raleigh.

My father was serving in HMS Constance 1923-25 on the North American and West Indies Station and as you can see the wreck was in a deplorable condition by that time.

WA Vandersteen
Winchester

Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tippie to the writer of our top letter. This month's winner is **WA Vandersteen**

JACKPOT!



Defiance days remembered

READING your article on the Greenies in January's edition of *Navy News*, brought back memories of my Naval career in the electrical branch.

I volunteered for the Royal Navy in May 1947 hoping to be a photographer. On my initial interview I was persuaded to join the new electrical branch.

Initial square-bashing was at HMS Excalibur at Asagar, near Stoke-on-Trent, on June 25 1947.

On completion I was drafted to HMS Defiance, the Devonport electrical school, comprising the three old ships Andromeda, Vulcan and Inconstant. My course began in September 1947, my class number was L9.

On completion in February 1948 I was drafted to HMS Cockade, along with another rating George Bilsbury, as EM IIs.

I was put to work with a PO LTO. George and myself were the first pure electrical ratings on Cockade and for some time I was polishing the brass on the torpedo tubes and at other times was the lifebuoy sentry on the quarter deck.

Eventually I got round to doing real electrical jobs on board. After a number of ships I ended up on HMS St Brides Bay

in 1952 during the Korean War. During this time I was rated up to A/LEM and, as I was required for a course, was drafted to HMS Unicorn and returned home in November 1953.

February 1954 saw me back on Defiance for my LEMs course. In June 1954 we as whole classes were transferred to HMS Collingwood to complete our courses as Defiance was closing.

On completion of my LEM course I was drafted to HMS Jupiter head of reserve fleet in Gare Loch in October 1954. As I had a high pass mark on my LEM course I was recommended for the mechanician course, which I began back at Collingwood in January 1955.

In November 1956 I was kept on at Collingwood as part

of the ship's company, then in August the following year I was drafted to HMS Diana as an EL Mech 11.

I was rated EL Mech 1 in February 1958 and joined the CPO's mess.

HMS Diana was my last sea-going ship, which I left in February 1959, joining HMS Vanguard, which was the headquarters ship for the Reserve Fleet Devonport, HMS Bellerophon.

I left the Royal Navy in June 1959, having completed 12 years' Service.

Fred Bunce
Wolverhampton



● HMS Diana was Fred Bunce's last sea-going Royal Navy ship

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THE JOURNEY DOES NOT HAVE TO END!

Naval personnel helping to guide tomorrow's engineers Inspiring teenagers



Setting a fine example

THE most senior female engineer in the Royal Navy took part in a *Dragons Den*-style event aimed at encouraging the next generation of Enterprising Women in Gosport.

Cdr Sophie Shaughnessy, the Executive Officer of HMS Sultan, was among the mentors and speakers taking part in the event at Bridgemary School, for girls from Year 9 at Gosport schools Bridgemary and Brune Park.

Groups of girls were given the task of formulating a business plan for the local area, under the supervision and guidance of a successful businesswoman.

With over 20 years experience as a Marine Engineer Officer, Cdr Shaughnessy was able to help encourage her group.

She said: "When you get these sort of teams of girls together, they have such inspiring ideas, they are just phenomenal. They respond differently in a dynamic where they are all girls, and they respond well to the mentors and

it's fantastic to see how all these other amazing ladies have talked about their businesses and work and they have all responded really positively to it.

"I think letting girls know they can be anything that they want to be, that there are no doors closed to them, is critical.

"The mentors are from all walks of life from all sorts of businesses and while I would clearly love it if they decided to join the Royal Navy, today is really about just making sure that they all fulfil their potential and making sure that they don't let anyone tell them that they can't do something."

Brune Park pupil Mia, 13, said: "The women have been very inspiring, especially to me as I was quite sure of what I wanted to do for a career and I am not sure now, the women here have inspired me that much. I've got some ideas now, I think I can go further in life, considering some of them were quite shy and have gone really far."



● Above, Nyall Thornton and Jools Clarke from Richard Lander School, who won the contest at RNAS Culdrose. Below, Submarine Air Purification Instructor, CPO Mike Woods, student James Colborn and Police CSO Ian 'Shiner' Wright work on the Cop Car project, at HMS Sultan

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins

THE engineers of tomorrow have joined Royal Navy personnel to show off their talents.

In Cornwall, 72 students competed in the annual Merlin Engineering Challenge at 824 NAS at RNAS Culdrose, while in Hampshire, children took part in a Cop Car project at HMS Sultan.

The Culdrose event, which is run by engineering firm Lockheed Martin, is now in its fifth year, and is more popular than ever, with 12 schools sending teams to take part.

Melanie Coles from Lockheed Martin said: "We are trying to get the children to understand what the Navy and Fleet Air Arm is all about and how our organisation supports the Navy.

"Culdrose is the home of the Merlin helicopter, and we are the prime contractor, so it's fantastic to put on events where we can mentor children from the local community."

The brief was to design and build a mechanism that could rescue a Merlin Mk 2 helicopter which had landed heavily in the desert.

The teams had five hours to complete the challenge, before Culdrose's Commander of Aircraft Engineering Jeff Bell announced that Jools Clarke, Kristina Catt, Nyall Thornton, Alex Moreman, Yasmin Stevens and Connor Finch of Richard Lander School were the winners.

He said their mechanism "had a slow and measured winch and a great deal of control."

The event allowed the students, who have an existing interest in maths, science and engineering, to work on the task in a military environment.

At Sultan children with a record of disruptive and anti-social behaviour are being given the chance to build healthy relations within the local community.

The Driving Futures, Hampshire Police Cop Car project is a ten-week challenge, which will see 11-16 year olds who face difficulties within the normal school system work as part of a team, in order to build an F24 Kit Car.

Bringing the students together with the Police, Royal Navy and the teaching and support staff from the Key Education Centre in Gosport, the project offers youngsters who are currently unable to attend regular schools the chance to grow in confidence, learn many new skills and to engage with the Police in a positive manner.

Police Community Support Officer Deana West, who recently joined Gosport Police Station's team, said: "Since the project began we have seen a reduced amount of disruptive behaviour from the children while they're out in the community. Building positive relationships with them is something we are really keen to do."

James Colborn, 14, said: "When I found out about the car I was quite excited as this is the first time I have ever done anything like this. I've not been on a Royal Navy base before and I was little bit nervous about meeting lots of people I didn't know, but they have been really nice and helpful.

"There has been a lot of learning from scratch, but they have been really good at explaining stuff and so I've got it all quite quick.

"I thought it was going to be quite difficult but from the look of it all, it looks as if it will all be done. I think engineering is amazing, it's been really good."

Instructor leads charge

AN engineer instructor from HMS Collingwood completed his induction at Winchester Science Centre to become a Science Technology Engineering Maths (STEM) Ambassador for young people.

POET(WE) Alan Bates attended the science centre after taking his first steps in becoming involved in the voluntary STEM programme, recognising the nationwide need for support to inspire young people's interest within STEM-based careers.

Alan said: "The aim of the STEM programme is to inspire schoolchildren and young students, allowing their interest to grow.

"Becoming an ambassador lets me directly influence and inspire the next generation to explore engineering by providing practical application to match the theory.

"I have chosen to become



● Alan, centre, in action at HMS Collingwood

involved in this programme as it's incredibly rewarding and it will have a positive knock on effect for us in the Royal Navy, hopefully encouraging and educating young people about careers in the various engineering branches we offer."





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Keeping up family tradition

WITH a surname like Goodrum there can be only one career for this family.

Writer Henrietta Goodrum celebrates passing out at HMS Raleigh with loved ones – becoming the fourth Goodrum in two generations to serve her nation under the White Ensign.

The Goodrum nautical story begins all the way back in 1981 with dad Simon, who joined as a minewarfare rating before switching to the medical world.

Commissioned in 1997, he's now a lieutenant commander in charge of training at the Institute of Naval Medicine in Alverstoke.

Mum Lucy is a former petty officer Naval nurse – she joined the QARNNS in 1983 and served in Germany, RNH Gibraltar and as the staff nurse in the casualty department of Haslar hospital... where she met her future



husband who was being treated as a patient.

She left the RN in 1991 when Sam Goodrum was born. A quarter of a century later, Sam is a 24-year-old warfare specialist who's completed his first operational deployment (to the Gulf) and is just about to leave frigate HMS Kent for a spell aboard Nelson's flagship, HMS

Victory in Portsmouth.

Which brings us on to Henrietta 'Hen' Goodrum, who worked as a doctor's receptionist before joining the Navy in November 2015.

She's staying at the Torpoint establishment to continue her specialist training as a writer at the Defence School of Maritime Logistics.



Outlook is bright

A WEATHERMAN from RNAS Culdrose is celebrating after being promoted to Warrant Officer First class.

WO1 (METOC) Timothy Anthony, 44, from Camborne was presented with his new shoulder badges of rank at a ceremony in the Air Traffic Control tower, by Cdr Jason Phillips, 'Wings' of the air station.

Tim's promotion is a very rare event in the small Hydrographical and Meteorological branch of the Royal Navy. There are only three METOC Warrant Officers – the last one being promoted nearly 15 years ago.

Tim attended Camborne Science and Community College in West Cornwall before first joining the Royal Marines and then transferring to the Royal Navy in 1989.

Apart from working at RNAS Culdrose where he is currently the Senior Forecaster and Training Officer, Tim has worked within Command Headquarters at Northwood in London and as an adventurous training and leadership instructor in the Brecon Beacons in Wales.

He's also worked with HMS Gannet SAR flight for nearly three years in Scotland as well as onboard many Royal Navy ships.



● Catherine Zeta Jones and Blake Harrison join military personnel at Chicksands

Picture: S/Sgt Adrian Harlen

Stars thank military for their Service

NAVAL personnel were thanked for their Service by the stars of the new *Dad's Army* film.

Catherine Zeta-Jones, who plays journalist Rose Winters, and Blake Harrison, who plays Private Pike, met with military personnel and their families during a special screening of the film at Joint Forces Command, Chicksands.

The Hollywood star addressed personnel

at the SSVF Forces Cinema at the training base in Bedfordshire, saying: "It's very British humour and about being able to laugh at yourself. It's timeless comedy and beautifully written. I think the military will enjoy the craziness and silliness of it all."

"We have a very proud military history and hope that all the military love it. Thank you for the service you give and all that you

do for your country - thank you all very much."

Blake added: "I am in awe of everything you do and what you give to the country; you are second to none."

Chicksands is home to the Joint Intelligence Training Group which trains approximately 5,000 students from all three Services as well as civilian analysts every year.

Children meet real heroes

Royal Marines drummers kicked off a Portsmouth school's 'real heroes' week in style with a surprise performance in the playground.

The five-strong Corps of Drums from the city's Royal Marines Band amazed pupils and staff at Court Lane Infant School, Cosham, with a dazzling 20-minute display to launch the 'Real Heroes are All Around Us' event.

The drummers were joined by four Navy divers and two firefighting instructors who gave talks and demonstrations about their professions.

It formed part of the school's week-long activities aimed at getting the message across to pupils that real heroes are all around them.

HMS Excellent-based CPO Paul Conybeer, one of the sailors involved, said: "The children were really enthusiastic about seeing and talking to the sailors. They were particularly fascinated by the divers, who are also bomb disposal experts, and the fact that there were so many different trades and careers available in the Royal Navy."

Pupil Seth Lewis, seven, said: "It was really cool to see the band in the playground when I got to school this morning – it was a really big surprise. I think the Royal Navy are heroes because they help keep our country safe,



Picture: LA(Phot) Paul Hall

● PO(D) Stuart Hibbs talks to pupils about bomb disposal

they are very brave and take lots of risks."

The event was also a hit with seven-year-old Elowen Woodward. "It has been really exciting to see the Royal Navy in our school – I think it would be very exciting to be in the Navy. My grandad was in the Navy and he was very brave and he got a medal."

Headteacher Jude Ramshaw added: "I wanted to invite the Royal Navy into school as

it's part of the rich heritage of the local community and it's important for children to see for themselves how the Armed Forces within our community encompass the heroic qualities that we talk about in school."

The nationwide Heroes Week initiative was inspired by The Inspiration Federation charity which educates youngsters and raises money to support injured members of the Armed Forces and emergency services.

Denmark's tribute

A ROYAL Navy officer has been honoured by Denmark for his work during a NATO exercise.

Lt Cdr Richard Wallace received the Danish Defence Medal for Meritorious International Service.

Lt Cdr Wallace joined the Danish-led Standing Naval Maritime Group 1 NATO Staff during Operation Ocean Shield in 2014.

He spent six months embarked in the Absalon-class support ship HDMS Esbern Snare while conducting a number of tasks, including counter-piracy patrols off the coast of Somalia.

"The opportunity to work alongside the Danish Navy was a real privilege and I am absolutely delighted to receive this medal in recognition of that service," said Lt Cdr Wallace.

He was presented with the medal – awarded by Queen Margrethe II – by the Danish Defence Attaché, Captain Martin La Cour-Andersen, during a visit to Whale Island in Portsmouth.

Denmark, which is a Joint Expeditionary Force partner nation, routinely sends units for training to Flag Officer Sea Training and to the Joint Warrior exercises in Scotland.

Met man reward

A NAVAL Airman from Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose has been presented with the Ebola Medal for Service in West Africa.

Naval Airman (METOC) John Taylor-Brown was a key member of RFA Argus' Met team which sailed to Sierra Leone.

He was part of Operation Gritrock, the UK government's response to the Ebola crisis in the African country.



The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust
Supporting The RNBT Family

TRUSTEE VACANCIES

The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT) was formed under Royal Charter in 1922 to help those who are serving or have served as Warrant Officers and below in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, and their dependants, who find themselves in need or distress. The Trust's beneficiaries are referred to as The RNBT Family and thousands of applicants, both serving and retired, are assisted every year.

A founding principle of the Trust is that it is predominantly run by those who are serving or have served as non-commissioned Sailors and Royal Marines. Accordingly 11 of the 17 trustees that form the RNBT's governing body (including the Trust's Vice President) are drawn from serving and retired personnel who have been or are RN ratings and RM other ranks.

Vacancies will occur for 3 such Trustee positions with effect from 1 April 2016 as part of the RNBT's routine governance 'refreshment' programme. The election of volunteers to fill these positions, including those who are standing down but may wish to stand for re-election, will happen in the last week of March.

Are you interested; can you contribute; do you want to find out more? If so please check out our website: www.rnbt.org.uk or contact the RNBT's Portsmouth based Head Office on 02392 690112. Trustee application packs may be applied for on-line via: rnbt@rnbt.org.uk

The closing date for applications is 14 March 2016.



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Personal tributes to Jutland's men of steel On canvas and in stone

THESE are the lines of the mighty castles of steel sailing to join battle in the greatest naval clash ever fought in European waters.

With the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Jutland imminent, CPO Stephen 'Bungy' Edwards – currently serving on the staff of the Royal Navy's headquarters in Bahrain – put brush to canvas.

The battle for control of the North Sea on May 31 and June 1 1916 engaged 150 British and 100 German ships – and 100,000 sailors and marines.

When it was over, Britain's Grand Fleet was master of the sea, but at the cost of 14 ships, more than 6,000 dead and 674 wounded.

Among the latter was Herbert Newman, a former coal miner from Chesterfield who suffered a head wound from an inch-long piece of shrapnel flying around the cruiser as she was hit by German shells – shrapnel Mr Newman, who returned to the pits post-war, held on to as a keepsake.

Inhaling coal dust eventually cost Herbert Newman his life – he died of pneumoconiosis and so his great grandson never had the opportunity to talk about his Jutland experiences – but the family handed the veteran's effects down to Bungy, which helped serve as inspiration for his tribute.

"I decided to paint a watercolour of the Grand Fleet out of respect for all the sailors who perished on that fateful day.

"It's a great regret that I never got to meet my great grandfather. My grandmother gave me a photograph of him after the battle – he's has a white bandage around his head – as well as the shrapnel which caused the injury."

Away from his day job helping to direct the Royal Navy's complex operations east of Suez, Bungy's passion for art has seen him visit Windsor Castle to present the Queen with a painting of the former Royal Yacht Britannia on behalf of the Association of Royal Yachtsmen, marking the great ship's 60th anniversary, and



he's just submitted two portraits to the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition.

And in Jutland itself, come the beginning of June, more than 8,500 stone figures will cluster around 26 granite pillars – each figure representing a British or German sailor lost in the battle.

The dunes outside the Danish fishing village of Thyborøn have been chosen as the site, around 90 miles east of the main site of the battle, is probably the closest location on land.

The sound of the guns of 250 British and German ships belching fire and fury on May 31-June 1 1916 could be heard along a 100-mile stretch of the Danish coast which gave the battle its British name (the Germans chose Skagerrak after the sea between Denmark and Norway).

Last year Danish diver and historian Gert Norman Andersen opened the Sea War Museum in Thyborøn with the emphasis on the fighting in the North Sea between 1914 and 1918.

He's been fascinated by the battle for more than half a century, has dived on some of the wrecks, and is determined to see "a final, respectful closure to the world's greatest naval battle, a monument on neutral ground – the park does not distinguish



between British and German sailors".

With Danish sculptor Paul Cederdorff he has come up with the idea of a permanent memorial (pictured above) honouring the sailors killed at Jutland in the rugged windswept dunes in Thyborøn.

Twenty-six 3½-metre stone obelisks will mark each ship lost – with the 26th standing for the more than 600 men killed on ships which survived the battle.

Eventually, around these pillars of remembrance there will be more than 8,000 individual 1.2-metre-high stones – one for each victim.

The memorial park has the backing of Nick Jellicoe and

Reinhard Scheer-Hennings, grandsons of the men who led the British and German fleets into battle that fateful Wednesday afternoon in 1916.

They say the result is a "memorial that the fallen of Jutland have always deserved" – and so are urging descendants of those who lost their lives in the battle, as well as people and organisations interested in the battle, to donate – either to help pay for the individual figures, or even to sponsor a 'ship' and its 'company'.

More details can be found at Jutland1916.com or by contacting Mr Andersen by emailing him on contact@jutlandbattlememorial.com.

New monument to tragic Hampshire

THE names of every man lost in a naval disaster which was a bodyblow to the British Empire will be unveiled on a new memorial to mark the centenary.

War Minister Lord Kitchener, his staff and all but 12 of the crew of the cruiser HMS Hampshire were lost when she struck a freshly-laid German mine off the Orkneys.

The June 5 1916 tragedy came just two days after news broke of the titanic clash between the British and German Navies at Jutland – a battle whose immediate outcome came as a huge disappointment to the British public.

Oradians erected an imposing tower on the headland overlooking the site of the wreck at Marwick Head to mark the tenth anniversary of the disaster.

As part of the centenary commemorations, the Kitchener Memorial is undergoing extensive restoration.

In addition, a memorial wall is being added as part of the £200,000 project by the Orkney Heritage Society.

Detailed research by historians Brian Budge and Andrew Hollinrake has resulted in the most accurate roll of honour for the Hampshire ever produced.

Some 737 names will be inscribed in panels on the wall, which will arc around the tower, with a separate panel for the staff of Lord Kitchener – and another one bearing the names of nine men killed on the drifter Laurel Crown, which was blown up in June 1916 while trying to clear the minefield.

Kitchener of Khartoum was among the most famous figures in Britain – it was his face on the iconic poster urging men to volunteer in 1914. He and his staff were heading to northern Russia on a diplomatic mission to discuss the conduct of the war.

On the back of Jutland 100 commemorations in Kirkwall and nearby Scapa Flow on May 31, a Royal Navy ship and Royal Marines musicians are also due to take part in the HMS Hampshire centenary events.

"It has taken many hours of work but it is an honour to do this to remember the men from HMS Hampshire, Kitchener's party and the Laurel Crown," said Mr Hollinrake.

"Everyone with an interest in this project – particularly family members – please look at our list and let us know if you think amendments are needed before the names are, literally, carved in stone."

He and Mr Budge ploughed through newspaper archives, official documents held by the National Archives in Kew and Commonwealth War Graves Commission in Maidenhead, as well as speaking to relatives and family historians and corrected the original death toll, which was 'only' 650.

Orkney Heritage Society has almost hit its fundraising target ahead of the centenary with under £10,000 to go.

You can make a donation via justgiving.com/orkneyheritagesociety and you can scroll through the roll of honour at hmshampshire.org.

Priddy please help out

DO you have artefacts relating to the Navy's 'foundry of war'?

If you do, then you could help tell the human story of the Royal Navy Armament Depot at Priddy's Hard in Gosport.

Historians at the site – now home of the Explosion Museum of Naval Firepower – want folk to raid their attics for old photographs and objects which capture life at the depot between

1757 and its closure in 1988.

Priddy's People aims to tell the civilian story behind the depot, with the items donated or loaned going on display on Bank Holiday Monday May 2 as part of a free street party being held in the museum's grounds.

A drop-in session to bring in items will be held at Explosion on Thursday April 7, 2.15-4.15pm, or call 023 9272 7595.

Remembering 13 and 18

DEEPS past and present gathered at the 21st Century home of the Submarine Service to pay tribute to one of the darkest hours in its 20th-Century history.

Ninety-nine years ago 32 men died when the steam-powered boat sank on trials – heralding a very grim chapter in the then-short life of the Silent Service.

Some 80 men were aboard **HMS K13** – more than twice the size of the standard Royal Navy submarine of the day – as she conducted diving trials with HMS E50.

On top of her 53 crew, there were engineers from her shipbuilders in Govan, Admiralty observers, a river pilot, and two observers from a sister boat, K14.

But when water poured into her engine room conducting a test dive, the boat plunged to the bed of the loch.

The captains of K13 and 14 both volunteered to raise the alarm by swimming to the surface, but only 13's Lt Cdr Godfrey Herbert made it; 14's Cdr Francis Goodhart died in the attempt.

In the end an airline was attached to the stricken vessel to blow the ballast tanks sufficiently for the bow to be raised out of the water and 47 men were rescued after a 57-hour ordeal.

The dead are remembered both at Govan's Elder Park – where there's a memorial to the shipbuilders lost – and in Faslane Cemetery at Garelochhead.

And 99 years later, submariners from Clyde Naval Base and members of the Submariners Association held a service of remembrance first in Govan, then in Faslane – the graveyard is next to the base

– with a formal wreath laying ceremony accompanied by a Royal Marines bugler.

"Although technology has revolutionised submarine safety over the past century, the special bravery, ethos and comradeship of submariners and the Submarine Service endures," said Command Warrant Officer Stefano Mannucci.

K13 was raised in March 1917, repaired and renamed HMS K22. She proved no more fortunate – badly damaged during a major exercise in the Forth in January 1918 which saw two K-boats lost and three more in need of major repairs.

Of the 18 boats in the class – dubbed 'K for calamity' by their crews – only one ever engaged the enemy, while six were lost on trials and exercises.

Meanwhile, simultaneous services in Portsmouth and the Estonian capital Tallinn will mark the 100th anniversary of the loss of WW1 submarine **HMS E18**.

All 33 men aboard the boat were lost off the island of Hiiumaa in the Gulf of Riga, probably on June 2 1916, most likely victim of a German mine.

The boat was part of a flotilla dispatched to the Baltic in the Great War to harass German shipping – Estonia was then part of the Russian Empire.

And HMS E18 did just that, blowing the bows off a German destroyer the very day before she is believed to have gone down with all hands (including three Russian liaison officers).

After searching for decades, the boat's wreck was discovered back in 2009.

Tracking down the relatives of the men

lost has proved rather more tricky – but some will hopefully attend one of the two acts of remembrance.

"So far we have contact with present-day families of 15 of those who lost their lives in 1916 – there were only four contacts when we started in 2009, so not bad progress. But we still have 18 'unknowns'," said Vic Powell, great grandson of 46-year-old William Powell who went down with E18.

RN chaplain the Rev James Francis will lead the service in St Ann's Church at 11am while at the same time (1pm in Estonia), the Rev Gustav Piir will be doing likewise in Tallinn's historic Püha Vaimu kirik, where there's a memorial plaque to those lost.

Relatives of crewmen Duffield, Edwards, Fox, Fuller, Galloway, Godward, Harris, Holland, Hunt, Maddox, Phillips AP, Pritchett, Spencer, Welsh and White, plus the Russian liaison crew of Markovsky, Pantyukhov and Polykarpov are urged to get in touch with the E18 association ahead of the centenary.

Anyone who can fill the gaps – or who is interested in attending either service – should contact Robert Davenport, whose grandmother was married to E18's slightly eccentric skipper Lt Cdr Robert Halahan (aside from being particularly superstitious, he also insisted on conducting his ablutions on the surface... occasionally placing his boat in peril).

Mr Davenport can be reached at robertdavenport@btinternet.com while Mr Powell is on info@pns1814.co.uk.

There's more information about the boat, its crew and locating the wreck at www.hmse18.org.



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Wetherby anniversary celebrated

WETHERBY shipmates celebrated their branch's anniversary 20 years to the day after it was commissioned.

To mark the occasion a formal evening event was held at Wetherby Social Club, where shipmates gather for their monthly meetings.

The room was decorated with bunting, and floral arrangements in red, white and blue were placed on every table.

A collection of press cuttings and photographs from over the years was put on display, and a cake was baked for the anniversary.

Invited guests included the Mayor of Wetherby, Cllr Harry Chapman, and his wife Jean, who did the honours by cutting the cake.

The Vicar of St James' Church, the Revd Brendan Giblin, and ratings in uniform from Ceres Division RNR (now HMS Ceres) in Leeds also attended, as did representatives of Wetherby Royal British Legion and RNA shipmates from Harrogate and York branches.

The evening began with a joint address by S/M Richard Knight, branch secretary, and S/M Vince Parks, social secretary, followed by branch secretary S/M Eric Drummond.

Two special toasts were made during the evening, one to absent friends and the second to the success and continuation of the branch.

A vote of thanks was also given to Dawn, the facilities manager of the social club, who produced the buffet.

Open invitation

RNA HQ Open Days for this year will be held on April 8, May 13, July 1, August 19 and October 7.

Branches wishing to book a place should contact HQ on 023 9272 3371.

The maximum number of places per date is 40 and spaces fill up very quickly.

Raid veteran returns

FLEET Air Arm personnel from RNAS Culdrose gathered to mark one of the most notable battle honours of World War 2 at an anniversary dinner alongside one of the few surviving veterans from the action.

Known as the Palembang Raids, the strikes on Japanese oil refineries in Sumatra during January 1945 was the largest FAA operation, and was estimated to have destroyed up to two thirds of Japan aviation fuel as well as reducing output.

Launching from carriers of the British Pacific Fleet, Avengers of 820, 849, 854 and 857 Naval Air Squadrons, each armed with four 500lb bombs, attacked the oil depots.

Corsair and Hellcat fighters as well as Firefly aircraft flew escort fighter and further strike missions, bringing the total strike force to 244 Royal Naval aircraft.

Palembang, along with Okinawa and Normandy, are still remembered as 849 NAS Battle Honours, and the three Flights named accordingly.

"I'm exceptionally proud to be Palembang's Flight Commander," said Lt Serena Davidson. "We formed up only 12 months ago and it's been a very varied and incredibly busy year."

Lt Fane Vernon was an Observer on 820 NAS at the raids.

He had first undertaken familiarisation flights with a Fleet Air Arm pilot named Laurence Olivier, who left his flying duties behind shortly after to make the acclaimed film *Henry V*.

Lt Vernon then joined 820 in June 1943, initially flying Albacores, before progressing to the Barracuda where he began flying with pilot Dave Hoggard, with whom he flew on virtually every flight in Barracudas and Avengers (along with TAG Robbie Robertson) until June 1945.

This period included embarkations in HMS Indefatigable, from which he conducted dive-bombing attacks



● Lt Serena Davidson shares a joke with Lt Fane Vernon, who was an Observer with 820 NAS on the Palembang Raids in January 1945 – an attack on one of the oil complexes is shown below

on Tirpitz in July and August 1944 (his log book records 'light flak, bags of twitch') and latterly in Avengers as part of the British Pacific Fleet including the Palembang attack on Jan 29 1945 (Meridian One).

On this occasion his log book records "Target in South Sumatra set on fire and destroyed. Aircraft returned with fuselage twisted. Flak not dangerous. En(emy) fighters not seen. Balloon cables dicey. 99 fighters destroyed."

Lt Vernon said: "It's always great to come back to the squadrons and see the young people in the FAA today."

"I joined the RN in 1942 and have some great memories of flying with Laurence Olivier at Worthy Down near Winchester."

"He had a few smashes and then he went off to make *Henry V*."

"It's wonderful to see all these people remembering what we did back then."

Attending the Palembang dinner as guest of honour was Olympic gold medalist Dame



Mary Peters, who holds an honorary rank as Captain in the Royal Naval Reserve.

Dame Mary spoke of the honour and privilege it was to attend the celebrations and have the chance to visit 849 NAS at Culdrose.

Serena continued: "Being a small flight, there is a close bond with everyone. We're looking forward to what comes up next and being able to commemorate the history of the Flight's operations at a celebratory dinner is extra special."

Bexhill closes

BEXHILL branch held a final meeting to lay up its standard after 22 years.

Branch padre Fr Robert Coates conducted the service at St Augustine's Church, at which 25 branch members were joined by civic dignitaries, other ex-Service associations, Sea Cadets and shipmates from Eastbourne branch and Area 2.

The branch is closing as both the secretary and treasurer have had to retire through ill-health, and with other members unable to take up the positions because of age or state of health, a committee could no longer be formed.



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Anzac Centre tells story of sacrifice

FORMER MAA Ted Thoday contacted *Navy News* to let shipmates know about the National Anzac Centre in Albany, Western Australia.

Ted and his wife Maura visited the centre a year ago and said "there really are no suitable words to describe the centre, but 'brilliant' and 'emotional' will have to suffice."

"We doubt many people left the centre dry-eyed."

He said they spent about three hours looking round the displays but only managed to cover about half.

The centre is dedicated solely to honouring the Australians and New Zealanders who served in

World War 1, and Albany was chosen as more than 40,000 Anzacs (Australia and New Zealand Army Corps) soldiers left the port to join the war.

Visitors are invited to assume the identity of one of 32 Anzac-related characters, following their personal experience of the war from recruitment and training to the front line in Gallipoli, the Western Front and the Middle East.

Stories are told through multimedia displays, artefacts, rare images and film, and audio, and at the end the fate of the 32 characters is revealed.

www.nationalanzaccentre.com.au



● S/M Dave Tollerton

Hundreds at funeral for Dave

MORE than 200 people attended the funeral of S/M Dave Tollerton, who has died at the age of 71.

Born and bred in Knotty Ash, Liverpool, Dave – the eldest of ten children – left home to join the Royal Navy as a Marine Engineering Mechanic – or Stoker – in early 1961.

He served primarily on aircraft carriers such as HM ships Ark Royal and Eagle, where he maintained the steam catapult rams that launched aircraft.

He served in the Royal Navy for ten years, visiting many countries, especially across the Far East, before his discharge, when he trained as a plumber and gas fitter.

Dave eventually finished as a gas fitter to open a successful bakery and confectionary shop in Bootle before going to work as a support worker at Mencap, and acting as a volunteer at Aintree Hospital.

He also worked as a guided tour operator in Liverpool, using his unparalleled knowledge of the city in which he grew up.

As an author, Dave published a book called *The Last Tango in Liverpool* and also a book of poetry.

In 1996 Dave joined Crosby branch of the RNA, and soon started making changes which saw him take the position of secretary and eventually chairman.

As a singer-songwriter, Dave gathered a team of 'volunteers' and produced the branch's first SODS Opera (Ship's Own Drama Society), which went on to perform sea shanties and comedy sketches across the North West, culminating in a two-hour show in 2013 at the Adelphi Hotel that was seen by more than 400 ex-sailors.

Dave continued to make changes to the RNA at a local level and was eventually asked to take over as Chairman of Area 10 – the largest area within the RNA.

He took his duties seriously, visiting branches and listening to their concerns and worries.

Voicing those concerns brought him into contact with HQ staff, and although not always in agreement with RNA HQ staff and officers, he earned their respect and friendship.

At the unveiling of the Naval Service memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum Dave was invited as a VIP guest to meet Prince Michael of Kent.

He was also invited to the Royal garden party in recognition of the work he had done for the Association

Dave leaves behind his wife Andrea, a large extended family, and an even larger group of friends.

His funeral, at St Nicholas Church Blundellsands and Crosby, was not only well-attended, but also saw the parading of the national, area and eight branch standards.

Party for Bill's big birthday

SHIPMATE Lloyd (Bill) Adams of Netley branch celebrated his 100th birthday with members of his family and friends at the Marwell Hotel.

Netley president S/M Paddy McClurg and chairman S/M Brian Sandom were privileged to be invited with their wives.

S/M Bill is a Hood veteran and is the oldest member of that association.

He was a Lieutenant Paymaster, and served throughout the war, after Hood mainly at Dartmouth.

He is not able to make too many meetings due to lack of mobility, but remains very fit in mind considering his age.

Rock bar calls time

A RENOWNED watering hole at Gibraltar has closed its doors for the final time – and former sailors and bootnecks from around the world converged on the Hole in t'Wall in Castle Street to reminisce.

Run by Charles Trico, or Charlie to his seafaring friends, the bar featured a distinctly nautical decoration scheme, with a combination of Royal Navy ensigns and memorabilia, golf cards and scrawled messages, amongst other things.

The final weekend, in January, saw Charles invited to the Gibraltar Officers and Senior Rates Messes, where Cdre Ian McGhie, Commander British Forces Gibraltar, and WO1 Mac McLoughlin presented Charles with farewell gifts, accompanied by some obligatory story-telling.

Farewell events continued on Saturday; the famous bar was crammed with over 200 serving and former sailors and Royal Marines, many having travelled some distance to be there.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our January edition (right) was Bildeston, and the county is Suffolk.

The correct answers were provided by Mr D Bevan, of Halstead, Essex, who wins the £50 prize.

In a similar vein, this month's mystery ship (above), was one of a class of more than 90 inshore minesweepers.

She was launched at the Bolson yard in Poole in March 1955, and like her sisters was named after villages whose names end in -ham.

1) What was her name, and 2) what is the name of the county where the village can be found? We have removed her pennant number from the image.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News,

Programme launched at Navy Command HQ

THE RNA's Shipmates and Oppos programme has been officially launched at a ceremony in Navy Command Headquarters in Portsmouth.

Representing the Royal Navy at the event, Naval Secretary Rear Admiral Simon Williams CVO, welcomed a group of Service leavers, including CPO Anderson, onto the programme.

Shipmates and Oppos, funded by Greenwich Hospital and administered by the RNA, offers free practical advice and a support service for everyone who leaves the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Reserves during their transition to civilian life and during the important five-year post-discharge period.

Apart from the Royal Navy as the main partner, the launch was also attended by other partner groups – the Royal Marines Association; the Association of Royal Navy Officers and the White Ensign Association – as well as senior executives from naval sector charities who work with serving and retired Naval personnel.

Everyone, regardless of their rank, trade and number of days served (or whether they have been medically discharged) can call upon the programme for practical support as often as they need it.

Although most Service leavers experience a smooth transition to civilian life, some do not, and the Shipmates and Oppos programme aims to provide 'an arm around the shoulder' and guide Service leavers through the maze of state and charitable-sector help available.



● Rear Admiral Williams (right) welcomes Service leavers, including CPO Anderson, onto the Shipmates and Oppos Programme

Programme manager Andy Christie, who served in the Royal Navy for 35 years, said: "We all know that adjusting to life in Civvy Street isn't always easy, especially if you've got a family, or are dealing with issues like finding a job and somewhere to live for the first time.

"We also know that the needs of our Servicemen and women will differ depending on their stage in life and career.

"We can find the help that suits their individual and family needs. "Just because they've left the Naval Service and have had to hand in their ID card, it doesn't mean they're no longer a part of the Naval family; this is where our programme comes in."

All Royal Navy/Royal Marines Service leavers will be provided with a Shipmates and Oppos Programme membership card at their point of release.

The credit card-sized

Cruise to Ireland

A REUNION cruise is to be run from September 29 to October 2 2017, aimed at veterans and serving members of the Royal Navy and Merchant Navy.

The cruise, on the 22,000-tonne liner MV Marco Polo, will leave from Liverpool on the Friday evening, allowing for runs ashore at Dublin and Cork, and ending in Bristol on the Monday morning.

Prices start from £199 per person for a standard inside twin cabin.

Bookings are with the CONA Holiday service; for more details of itinerary and prices call 0844 264 2122 or email conatravelservices@justforgroups.co.uk

↓ RNA HQ, Room 209, Semaphore Tower (PP70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.

↓ admin@royalnavalassoc.com

↓ 023 9272 3747

↓ www.royal-naval-association.co.uk



Reward for Roy

IPSWICH branch chairman S/M Roy Brockman has been presented with a special status as a reward for years of hard work for the branch.

At a recent branch event Ipswich Life Vice President S/M John Dent presented Life Membership of the Association to S/M Brockman (pictured above).

The award was made as a sign of shipmates' "esteem and appreciation for many years of his outstanding efforts as Chairman of our branch and for his development of good relations with the local Sea Cadet unit, the Royal British Legion, the Wrens Association and the Korean Veterans."

Hermes event

HMS Hermes Association is holding a reunion at the Holiday Inn in Plymouth from April 7 to 11.

Bookings are through Isle of Wight Tours at 01983 405116; for more details contact Jim Loveday at hmshermes@btinternet.com

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From capital ships to top apprenticeships

ONE minute you're slaving away in the galley in HMS Westminster or covered in oil fixing some sensor or weapon aboard flagship HMS Ocean...

...the next your in No.10 Downing Street meeting the PM. ET(WE) Ray Hamilton and LCH Matthew Tew were invited to a reception at the premier's home as two stand-out figures in the RN in the world of apprenticeships.

ET Hamilton was nominated for his performance during his apprenticeship while LCH Tew was singled out for his inspirational support and development of apprentices aboard the Type 23.

With the ship in refit in Portsmouth Naval Base, LCH Tew took it upon himself to lay on a fine-dining experience using the jetty facilities, challenging the chefs and stewards onboard to enhance their skills.

"I didn't know when I completed the service history form that I was applying for consideration to be sent to meet the PM, all I knew that it was a trip to London," said ET Hamilton.

While getting changed into his No.1s at MOD HQ in Whitehall, he was asked if he was heading across the road to Mr Cameron's abode for the reception.

"Aye mate, what about you?" It was then I realised he was actually an air commodore, flanked by a WO1. I now assume everybody who works there is a Sir or Ma'am until proven otherwise."

The junior rate continued: "The reception itself was very interesting, I met a lot of former apprentices who'd built successful businesses or worked in important roles in industry with major multinationals.

"I was also number-checked by a lot of former Royal Navy personnel who took great delight in telling me that they'd been a sprog apprentice once upon a time.

"The reception has shown me that you can use the training and apprenticeships the Royal Navy offers you to have a successful career both in and out of the Service, with plenty of companies who are more than happy to employ former RN apprentices."

The two junior ratings were accompanied at the reception by Cdr Sarah Johns, the RN's Head of Education and Apprenticeships.

"To have the commitment of both the apprentices and the Royal Naval apprenticeship programme recognised at No.10 is outstanding and a great experience and honour," she said.



Pulling stoker faces

STOKERS, thousands of 'em. Actually 213 (yes, we counted them... and yes it was rather laborious).

These are the RN's engineers of tomorrow taking shelter from the weather of today (well, beginning of Feb) in the surroundings of Watt Hangar at HMS Sultan (younger readers may not know that the Gosport establishment occupies a former airbase) for a No.1 Inspection.

The latest batch of sailors on the Engineering Technician Initial Career Course – introduced in 2014 to give the RN's engineers increased hands-on experience of the machinery and systems they'll be using in the front-line Fleet – fell in their smartest uniforms for the inspection (which is a mixture of discipline/kit muster and unit pride – think of it as divisions without the senior officer at the end doing the inspection).

For divisional officers from the Defence College of Technical Training's Defence School of Marine Engineering (yes, that's the full, snappy title) supervising the students, it was a reminder of their experiences surrounded by yesterday's machinery in New-comen Hangar (which is today used to train the RN's air, rather than marine, engineers).

The Y100 boiler and steam turbines of yesteryear have now been replaced by WR21 gas turbines and state-of-the-art CAT and Wartsila diesel engines.

"The inspection was a fantastic reminder for all the staff of our own early training," said CPO Nigel 'Curly' Watts.

"Looking back further, thoughts of our heritage come to mind as we walk past the black and white photographs on display, including the images of our stoker ancestors down below in square rig and coaling ship in tropical whites!

"Nothing much changes, as stokers in No.1s we all fell in next to the machinery that they are sure to grow to know and love."

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins, HMS Sultan

Say goodbye to DII

THIS year the MOD and Navy Command will reinvent the way we use our IT systems with the long-anticipated arrival of the New Style of IT (NSoIT) Platform.

Mike Stone, the Chief Defence Information Officer, determined that DII(F) could no longer fully support the MOD's business needs.

In its place, NSoIT will be a cloud-based service which will allow true collaborative working, and in time, true mobility – including the use of tablets and smartphones.

Collaboration on live documents, presentations, and projects will enable dynamic business practices, and will deliver wide-ranging benefits.

NSoIT also provides access to Microsoft Office 365 software, which will include productivity tools for easier and more effective ways of sharing information.

There will be a change to voice services and 95 per cent of all telephone calls will involve Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP). This change will enable greater use of software-driven address books and audio meetings.

NSoIT is known as an Evergreen system, which means that the system remains up to date and should be no more than 90 days behind any updates released by Microsoft or other supported applications.

NSoIT will provide a new high-level self-help system to augment SPOC services – known as the Virtual Agent, or Sally. Sally will allow an NSoIT user to directly ask a question before seeking further help from SPOC. Reference guides will also be provided, and will be available via a new portal that will be accessible from the desktop. The self-help portal will also include Microsoft training packages that will allow users to understand the platforms provided by the system better.

NSoIT will initially only be rolling out to shore establishments, but there are plans to update ships and submarines with the new system over the next few years.

This doesn't mean that sailors will not be affected by these changes though, as the way that



the onboard systems interact with the shore environment is going to have to be adapted.

New ways of working ("WoW") will need to be developed for NSoIT, DII(F) and other systems to ensure that the Fleet continues to be able to operate effectively during the migration period.

Before the new system can be rolled out later in the year, it is crucial to test all possible elements and capabilities in order to prevent any major disruption.

Beta testing begins in May, and will act as the final testing phase

in order to ensure that the system is ready. Users will experience the full range of NSoIT capabilities and there will be a wide range of test and trial activities to be carried out, including application testing in the live environment, and refining the WoW.

The NSoIT migration process is expected to be a bumpy road and there are tasks that the Navy user must do to help ease this process. Essential activities include moving all shared documents from personal and shared group drives to MOSS;

finalised records should be filed in Meridio. Documents which are no longer 'works in progress' or filed as a record should be deleted.

Where possible, users should aim to reduce all pre-migration holdings to no more than ten per cent of what is currently held in community data storage. These actions are crucial to ensure effective data migration.

Although the migration process may prove arduous, it will prove to be a highly valuable effort.

See the NSoIT Defence Intranet Page, the Navy Command – New Style of IT Defence Connect Group, or contact the team directly on NAVYIS-SPTNSOITMAILBOX@MOD.uk.

NEED to get your message across?

To feature in the Navy News Two-Six pages contact Navy Command Media – Internal Comms Staff Officer: Lt Cdr Emma McCormick, 93832 8809, email NAVY.MEDIACOMMS-IC-TL@NAVY.MEDIACOMMS-IC-TL@mod.uk

Your career doesn't end when you leave the full-time Navy...

PROJECT Firefly offers an alternative journey to join the Royal Naval or Royal Marines Reserve. As a Maritime Reservist you can earn extra money, a pension and receive an annual tax-free bounty of up to £1,725.

It provides opportunities for continued professional development and promotion – and offers a chance to remain part of the Naval Family with its unique camaraderie.

Since its inception back in April 2013, Firefly has helped 400 highly-skilled Service personnel cross over from the full-time RN/RM.

And it has also helped to influence the size and shape of the Reserves as part of the plan to double the Trained Strength population of its Maritime Reserves to 3,100 between 2013 and 2018.

This year the project will be reaching out into the ex-regular community, with those who left the Service (up to 24 months ago) being processed through the NPT(Res) department rather than the current Armed Forces Careers Office method and managed in parallel with the seamless transfer scheme.

With a maximum joining age of 57 (RNR) and 52 (RMR), the many benefits to be enjoyed in the Maritime Reserves for a commitment of just 24

(RNR) and 26 days (RMR) include:

- additional pay and pension;
- value placed on your skill sets that you have worked hard to cultivate during your time in service and in the vast majority of cases retaining your current rank/rate;
- a more stable work/life balance, with an initial two-year harmony period. This is to provide peace of mind to both the Service leaver and their new employers – there is no compulsory mobilisation during this period;
- the opportunity to take up full-time positions through FTRS or part-time work through Additional Duties Commitments (ADC) or Man Training Days (MTD);
- all benefits are in addition to any civilian pay/benefits received and does not affect any Service pension that has been accrued;
- the Firefly team are willing to travel and brief groups or conduct individual interviews.

Further information can be found in 2015DIN 01-213, or speak to one of the team: WO1 Paul Jones on 023 9262 8784 or navypers-resffengwo@mod.uk and PO(Wtr) 'Buster' Brown on 023 9262 8677 or navypers-restpa@mod.uk.

Where to look

RNTM

025/16 New Forest Lodge – Shorefields Holiday Park
026/16 Royal Navy Photographic Specialisation – process for sideways entry to the branch
033/16 Engineering GS and FAA to Submarine Service (ESM) transfer roadshow – SSMP internal recruiting visits
053/16 Engineering General Service (EGS) financial retention incentive and professional qualification payments
055/16 Direct Entry Technician (DET)
056/16 Introduction of Divisional Refresher Course onto the Defence Learning Environment

GALAXY BRIEFS

07-2016 Royal Navy Engineering General Service financial retention incentive and professional qualification payments
06-2016 1SL: Royal Navy and Royal Marines in top 10 for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality

DINS

2016DIN01-006: Electoral Registration – members of the Armed Forces and their spouses or civil partners [Superseded DIN 2015DIN01-012]
2016DIN01-009: The Armed Forces Stakeholder Pension Scheme [Supersedes DIN 2012DIN01-210]
2016DIN01-017: RN and RM appraisal reports: The Definition of Merit for Promotion
2016DIN07-034: Joint Service Adventure Training (JSAT) air activities: paragliding, parachuting and gliding – course schedules 2016/17 [Superseded DIN 2014DIN07-172, 2014DIN07-177, 2014DIN07-071 and 2014DIN07-014]
2016DIN10-004: Royal Navy Golf Championships 2016 general competition

Pakistani chief visits

DESTROYER HMS Dauntless hosted the head of the Pakistani Navy, Admiral Muhammad Zakaullah, as he paid a whistle-stop visit to the UK to catch up on developments in the Senior Service.

The Pakistani officer and his staff were shown around the Type 45 destroyer in Portsmouth Naval Base, made the short trip to nearby HMS Victory to soak up Senior Service heritage and visited the Navy Command HQ in Leach Building on Whale Island for talks with outgoing Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Sir Philip Jones.

During the five-day visit, Admiral Zakaullah also called on First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas to discuss Anglo-Pakistani naval operations in the Middle East, including tackling piracy, and visited new carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth in the final stages of construction in Rosyth.

Boost self-esteem, mood, sleep quality and energy. Get moving. Drink water.

Your feedback does matter

THERE have been two initiatives announced recently which were prompted by evidence from you that we provided to the government and industry to tackle commercial disadvantage.

Firstly, Armed Forces families posted overseas will now be able to suspend their UK mobile phone contracts: Vodafone, EE Three and O2 have all signed up, so make sure you are aware of what's on offer.

Secondly, Armed Forces families posted overseas will now be able to get a better deal on mortgages and will be able to rent out their home without facing higher mortgage costs or having to change their mortgage, saving time and money.

We're pleased to see these policies have now been put into practice and we encourage you to continue to get in contact with us, so we can get your voice heard.

On that note, the Families Continuous Attitude Survey



(FAMCAS) will be open until May 6.

This survey is your opportunity to tell the Naval Service your views. It will be sent out to 9,500 Naval Service personnel to forward on to their spouses and civil partners.

Should you receive a copy please complete it as the Naval Service uses the results as evidence to inform policy and strategy. It advises stakeholders in many areas – including accommodation, Armed Forces Covenant and childcare, so it's very influential.

£5k bounty to go deep

A £5,000 'golden hello' is being offered to surface fleet and air engineers to encourage them to switch to the Submarine Service.

Deepes are looking for up to 40 marine and weapon engineering ratings at the leading hand/petty officer level to cross over from life on and above the waves.

By now your establishment or ship should have been visited by the Sustainable Submarine Manpower Programme team. The deadline for nominations for transfer is March 26.

"This is a proactive step to make sure that we have the right people with the right engineering qualifications in the right place at the right time," said Rear Admiral Submarines Rear Admiral John Weale.

"In part, this is a response to private industry poaching our extremely well-trained engineering experts in the civil nuclear industry and beyond."

Those accepted will receive the £5,000 bounty once they earn their dolphins – recognition that they have qualified as a submariner.

In addition, they will be entitled to the submarine pay package which could equate to as much as 25 per cent depending on rank and specialisation. This comes with it a five-year return of service once they become submarine qualified.

All volunteers must have at least three years left to serve; accept an extension of service; be medically fully employable and hold – or be willing to hold – sole British nationality.

Once transferred and qualified as submariners, branch specific training will begin.

Those interested in transferring to the Submarine Service can contact the team on 9380 28603 or NAVYPER-SSMCOMMUNICATIONS@mod.uk.

Meanwhile, two former submariners have been welcomed at Faslane as the first members of the Royal Naval Reserve (RNR) Engineer Branch.

CPOs Mark Davies and Tim Spence both completed their 22



● WEs carry out checks on HMS Triumph's hi-tech sensors

Picture: CPO(Phot) Tam McDonald

years in the RN before heading to full-time employment in civvy street.

They've been enticed back to the Colours to use their engineering know-how in the newly formed Engineer Reserves Branch.

Mark left the RN back in 2008 after a career above the waves in HMS Bristol and Leanders before moving into S-boats.

He now works for Babcock at Faslane's Astute Training Facility. Tim served in 23s and 42s before also transferring to the Silent Service in three V-boats.

He left the RN three years ago, since when he's worked for BAE in Barrow-in-Furness.

"I saw volunteering for the Engineer Reserves Branch as a great opportunity," said Tim. "It's an opportunity to keep my hand in, an opportunity to

learn skills which will benefit my employer, and also a chance to lend the Royal Navy the knowledge and experience I have accumulated since leaving. It's good for everyone."

He's using his expertise at the Naval Base's Periscope Workshop, carrying out essential maintenance tasks, while Mark is working with Afloat Repair Electrical.

In the future the pair hope to be employed directly on submarines to assist the crew during maintenance periods.

Mark added: "One of the great things about joining the Engineer Reserve Branch is that it takes us back to the workshops and submarines and back to that practical, hands-on, work that attracted us to engineering in the first place. I also miss the free socks..."

The Engineer Reserve Branch was reintroduced in July 2014 after a 21-year break.

At present there are some 50 Reserve Engineers serving with the Branch around the country with more sought.

Most personnel who transfer after regular service will join at their previous rank or rate and with the same pay scale. Those who complete their required 24-day commitment and are in date for the RN fitness test could earn a tax-free bonus of up to £1,725. The age limit is currently 57 years old.

"The camaraderie is brilliant too," said Tim. "It was good to come back as a Reservist, get back into the Mess and meet a few of the faces I served with previously. There's been a lot of interest and questions from them about the Engineering Branch."

All set to run DMG

NAVAL Nurse Abigail Wrigley receives the first cap tally signalling the name change and shake-up of front-line military healthcare.

No longer does the junior rating work for MDHU Derriford... but DMG (South West).

Last summer the MDHUs – Ministry of Defence Hospital Units – were reorganised and collectively rebranded under the new Defence Medical Group...

...whose commander is Surg Cdre Andy Hughes (seen here presenting the new tally), based at the HQ of the Surgeon General in Lichfield.

The reorganisation has been driven in part by the Health and Social Care Act of 2012; the MOD is now required far less when it comes to providing secondary healthcare to the UK population.

As a result, the role of the MDHUs moved away from delivering patient care and is now primarily focused on coordinating the delivery of suitably-qualified and experienced military secondary healthcare personnel for operations.

It also means there's no need any longer for the Military Patient Administration Cell (MPAC), which has been disbanded.

The majority of medics and military clinicians working for DMG (South West) – the term 'hospital' has been removed because the implied function of providing healthcare no longer exists – continue to be based in Plymouth, with a smaller number in Truro, Royal Devon & Exeter and Bristol NHS Trusts.

DMG SOUTH WEST

Click, click, click to Navyfit

THE Royal Navy's new sports pages – NavyFit – have proved to be popular among Naval personnel looking to maintain or improve their health and fitness.

"In the first five hours of the launch 1,000 people logged into NavyFit," said Capt Mike Young, the RN's Head of Physical Development. "Since then there has been a steady pace of visitors – around 3,500 a week – which is hugely encouraging. We continue to work hard to encourage Service personnel to visit – it is in their interests to be NavyFit."

Launched in January and endorsed by Assistant Chief of

Naval Staff (Personnel) Rear Admiral Simon Williams – himself a keen cyclist – NavyFit contains information on sports, fitness, health and adventurous training. Every week a new item is uploaded to the website including workouts, diet tips, meal guides and health advice.

The NavyFit communications campaign – designed to attract personnel to the site – has been chosen as a first-rate example by DE&S and the MOD, and will be showcased at two Defence events later this month.

Visit www.royalnavy.mod.uk/navyfit

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APPLY TO BECOME A CAREERS ADVISER - A MOST REWARDING SECOND CAREER

Flag Officer Sea Training is currently seeking RN and RM WOs, Senior Rates and SNCO Service Leavers and former Service (those that left Service under 2 years), to work in Armed Forces Careers Offices around the UK.

- Enlist on Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) Limited Commitment employment in specific locations.
- Salary from £29k with promotion opportunities to rise to £41k.
- FTRS rates of pay apply (Reviewed annually and pensionable)

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CURRENT CAREERS ADVISER VACANCIES CONTACT:

PSTN: 01929 403172 MIL: 94374 3172 e-mail: navycnr-rncrtlc@mod.uk





● Surg Lt Cdr Sean Miles and Sgt Adam

Air cadet promoted on flagship

WHEN Cpl Adam of Plymouth and Cornwall Wing Air Training Corps visited HMS Ocean at Devonport Naval Base with his fellow squadron members, he was not aware that there was a surprise in store.

Adam had been selected for promotion to sergeant but the squadron staff thought it would make the event special if it was to happen during the visit.

The presentation was made by Surg Lt Cdr Sean Miles, until recently the flagship's medical officer, who conducted the cadets during the visit.

Adam commented that the visit was great but the promotion really was the icing on the cake.



● Portland Sea Cadets brave strong winds and driving rain to celebrate the granting of the Freedom of the Island and Royal Manor of Portland

Honour for Portland

SEA Cadets from across Somerset and Dorset joined Portland unit as they were granted the Freedom of the Island and Royal Manor of Portland.

The award was made during the annual Accession Service at All Saints Church in Easton,

Portland, which marks the Accession of Queen Elizabeth II to the throne.

A full congregation saw the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Dorset, Cdr Rupert Best DL, present the Freedom Scroll to Cadet Amber, flanked by two Escort Cadets Ethan and Harry.

Portland unit has been invested with the Freedom by Portland Town Council in recognition and appreciation of many years supporting the community of Portland.

The High Sheriff of Dorset, Mrs Jennifer Coombs, presented a duplicate scroll to the Church Warden of All Saints Church, where it will be placed on public display.

The flag of Portland was also presented to Cadet Chris by the Mayor's Chaplain, to be carried by cadets on local ceremonial occasions.

The church service was followed by a parade of 120 Sea Cadets and adult volunteers through Easton Square, with Portland Sea Cadets exercising their right to march bearing arms, with standards flying and drums beating.

Representatives of various local organisations also braved the strong winds and rain to join the Parade.

Lt (SCC) Rachel Harris, the Commanding Officer of Portland unit, said: "We are

absolutely honoured to have been recognised in this way, and it was certainly a fantastic surprise.

"Our cadets participate in many different activities on and off the water, but it is our presence within the community and the support that we give to local civic events that really gives us our identity.

"This year marks 60 years since our Sea Cadet unit first formed and the Freedom has been granted in acknowledgement of the close involvement that we have had with local events over the years.

"It was particularly fitting to have a number of previous cadets and adult volunteers spanning those years attend the service, as well as members of Portland Royal Naval Association that have in turn supported us over the years.

"I myself have been with Portland Sea Cadets for more than 30 years, both as a cadet and an adult volunteer, so I know first-hand the positive experiences that we offer young people and the strong ties that we have forged in the community."



● Duchy College students learn drill at HMS Raleigh
Picture: Dave Sherfield

Students learn the drill

MILITARY Academy students from Duchy College in Cornwall have been put through their paces during a two-day visit to HMS Raleigh.

Students underwent teamwork and leadership exercise as well as gym sessions during their stay at the Torpoint training establishment.

They also spent time with HMS Raleigh's parade staff, where they were introduced to discipline and marching.

Student Beth, 16, said: "I am level two at the moment and will be going onto level three next year to build up my fitness.

"I love coming to HMS Raleigh, we are so lucky to come to a place like this; we get to learn a lot and build up our fitness.

"If you do want to join the forces this is the course for you."

The training the students experience is based on the ten-week Initial Naval Training programme for new recruits.

Under the partnership established last year a group of students spend two days at HMS Raleigh each month.

Student Charlie said: "The course at Duchy is second to none; it has really improved my fitness and knowledge of the forces.

"I have completed level three early and I'm going to the Army Foundation College at Harrogate next month.

"The course has really helped get me ready for my next step.

"The days we have at HMS Raleigh are a lot of fun and really help our teamwork skills."

Fellow student Jack said: "The course has been amazing so far.

"You get so hands-on with everything and you do so many tasks.

Coming to HMS Raleigh gives us such a head start for whatever you go on to.

"It is amazing we get this opportunity as I am hoping to go into the Marines."

Capt Rob Bellfield, the Commanding Officer of HMS Raleigh, said: "We are delighted to be able to share our training methods with the students at Duchy College and hope that what they learn here will give them a head-start as they embark on their future careers."

Jon Stone, Lecturer for Military Academy at Duchy Stoke, said: "All the students are taught by lecturers who have a military background, but having this experience in a Phase One training establishment is invaluable.

"They get a real feel of what it is like and if it is going to be for them."



● Lt Cdr Tony Ward, Executive Officer of HMS Warrior, joins members of Littlehampton unit to help the cadets celebrate a string of successes

Junior Warriors rewarded

LITTLEHAMPTON unit cadets welcomed a special visitor after unprecedented success in district competitions.

Junior Cadets won the Warrior Trophy for achieving the most points in district competitions for the second year running.

Littlehampton is the first unit in the district to retain the trophy.

Lt Cdr Tony Ford, Executive Officer of Victorian ironclad warship HMS Warrior, visited

the unit at the end of January to celebrate the cadets' success.

Lt (SCC) Brian Osborne RNR, Commanding officer at Littlehampton unit, and APO Tara Osborne, Junior Cadet coordinator, said it was "a very special occasion and privilege for us.

"To win the trophy, the Junior Cadets had to participate in six competitions.

"These were piping, rowing, a

five-a-side football tournament and potted sports tournament, swimming and shooting."

By winning the trophy, the Junior Cadets also won a guided tour of HMS Warrior, permanently on display at the Historic Dockyard in Portsmouth, which they are all thoroughly looking forward to.

"We would like to say a massive thank you for all their hard work and commitment," added Tara.

Scottish tradition in Welsh Marches

ROSS and Monmouth unit was invited to support the British Warships Association's Burns Night Dinner, which was held at St Pierre Golf and Country Club.

Five cadets, the Officer in Charge and Executive Officer travelled to Chepstow for the evening.

On arrival the cadets were inspected by the Guest of Honour, Brig Robbins RM, who is currently a trustee of the RNRMC.

Brig Robbins chatted to the cadets and offered support to those who expressed a wish to pursue a career in the Royal Navy.

The British Warships Association is an organisation

established to link Royal Navy warships with the communities of their affiliated home regions.

They create a support group for each warship, called an 'Auxiliary Crew', through which members can support their sailors.

The cadets' duties included assisting with the stewarding and door-opening duties.

Once all the guests had arrived they were responsible for assisting the pipers and drummer in leading the guests to dinner.

After all the guests were seated the vice president expressed his thanks to the cadets – and the group departed for home.



● A somewhat novel celebration at TS Phoebe in Bournemouth on the ordination of the Revd Rodney Coffin

Quarterdeck ordination

THE Revd Rodney Coffin was ordained on the Quarterdeck of TS Phoebe, Bournemouth unit's training ship.

The service was led by Archbishop Jonathan Blake, Bishop of Greater London and the Open Episcopal Church, in the presence of the Mayor of Bournemouth, Cllr John Adams, and Mayoress Suzie Adams, supported by clergy, dignitaries and enthusiastic cadets.

Rodney is a former Royal Yachtsman and was a CO of Bournemouth unit.

His new ministry will involve him with the Sea Cadet Corps and working within the

community.

Rodney said: "I am an ex-Royal Yachtsman, serving in Britannia as the Petty Officer Electrician between 1971 and 1979.

"I did serve in General Service from 1962 until 1971, then returned to the Fleet in 1979 to serve with the Royal Marines.

"On discharge from the RN in 1980, and by a fairly tortuous route, I eventually became the CO of TS Phoebe in 1997.

"All the activities regarding my ordination took place on the Quarterdeck of TS Phoebe, and I hope to become their Chaplain when the present incumbent retires."



● A Lochaber cadet tries the CO's chair for size on HMS Blyth

Minehunter welcomes Lochaber

IT'S not every day that you get an invitation to tour the hidden secrets of a Royal Navy warship, but that's what happened to young people from Fort William who are members of Lochaber unit.

The invitation was taken up with alacrity and so it was that, despite chilly weather and snow flurries, the cadets boarded HMS Blyth, which was tied up at Oban's North Pier.

At 450 tons Blyth, a Sandown-class minehunter, may not be one of the Royal Navy's largest vessels, but it is nevertheless a complex piece of machinery that is both a tool to save lives by disposing of mines and also a home to its crew of 34.

Using sonar, it seeks out objects of interest – potential mines – and blows them up using its own remotely-controlled submarine.

Not only does the ship use this method to keep shipping lanes and harbours open, but it is sometimes called on to make mines and other ordnance safe after the munitions have been sitting on the sea bed for 70 years or more.

Inevitably, Blyth has to be able to look after herself, and so it was great enthusiasm that the cadets got to grips with some of her defence systems in the forms of various guns.

Once inside the ship, the young people were told about how the engineers work as a team to keep Blyth's systems running, including her generators, which produce enough electricity to power about a third of Oban.

The tour also included the ship's operations room and the bridge, where they saw how the ship is navigated and steered in all weathers.

AC Deeann said: "I want to join the Royal Navy as an engineer officer, so it was really good to see at first-hand what the engineers do in a minehunter."

LC Hannah said: "It was a real privilege to be given such a fantastic tour of the ship. Everyone was really brilliant."

Blyth's Operations Officer Lt James Dutt said: "It has been an honour to host TS St Christopher."

"We hope to be able to see them again in future engagements."

Lt (SCC) Derrick Warner RNR, Commanding Officer of Lochaber unit, said: "We're tremendously grateful to everyone who made this trip possible."

"We know from previous experience that many of these young people will remember this visit for the rest of their lives."

"It also gives them the chance to see how what we teach them is used on a daily basis in a modern warship."



Pool of talent

NEARLY 200 young people from across the UK travelled to HMS Raleigh in Cornwall to take part in the annual Royal Navy Sea Scout swimming gala.

In total 17 Royal-Navy-recognised Sea Scout troops and 13 Explorer Sea Scout units gathered at the Royal Navy training base in Torpoint to enter the two-day competition.

The youngsters, aged between 10 and 18, competed in various categories over a range of distances.

The overall Sea Scout winning team was the 4th Heswall Sea

Scouts, from the Wirral.

For the Explorers, the laurels went to the 6th Itchen Explorer Sea Scout unit from Southampton.

Martin James, leader of the 4th Heswall Sea Scout troop, said: "I first came to HMS Raleigh in 1975 as a scout to compete for our unit in the swimming gala."

"Since then I've been back on and off as a leader. Winning the scout section of the gala was the highlight of the weekend for us all. "Our Explorers came second in the under-18 age group too, which was marvellous."

"When we told our scouts they would have to come back

next year to defend the trophy, they wanted to know if, as the winners, they could have a lie-in in the morning instead of getting up at 5.30am..."

The event was supported by 58 Adult Leaders, some from the troops attending, others from groups who could not attend this time, and also members of the Admiral Lord Nelson Scout Active Support Unit (ALNSASU).

Michael Elkins, a leader with the 2nd Abingdon Sea Scouts, was in overall charge of the gala.

He said: "Being a Royal-Navy-recognised troop or unit means that to gain and keep that recognition, the young people

and their leaders must work hard to reach and maintain the standards required."

"There is a certain amount of kudos in being able to say we are Royal-Navy-Recognised Sea Scouts."

"The scheme offers opportunities for young people and their leaders to engage with the Royal Navy and take part in events and activities that they would not normally be able to access."

Nathan Cole, assistant scout leader at the 5th Gosport Sea Scout troop, said: "Being a Royal Navy Sea Scout is a fantastic opportunity and we encourage our kids to make the most of all the events that the scheme offers."

"The relationships and friendships that they make through the regular camps can, and do, last a life time."

"This is where the gala at Raleigh really plays a role."

"Quite often this is the first time a scout has been away from home, so for the first five minutes they barely leave your side."

"However, by the end of the weekend they're running around the accommodation having a great time."

Among the former Sea Scouts who have gone on to join the Senior Service is Capt Rob Bellfield, the Commanding Officer of HMS Raleigh.

Capt Bellfield said: "My time in the 5th Woodbridge Sea Scouts, in Suffolk, helped lay the foundations for my future career in the Royal Navy."

"I remember we were immensely proud of being an Admiralty-recognised unit."

Responsibility for Naval Service Youth, encompassing the Sea Cadet Corps, the Volunteer Cadets Corps, the Combined Cadet Force and the RN Sea Scouts, was transferred to the command of Cdre Bob Fancy last year.

Cdre Fancy is also in overall charge of initial training for all Royal Navy and Royal Marines recruits.

He said: "The Sea Scouts provide a great opportunity for young people to enjoy aspects of the Royal Navy's culture and ethos in a challenging and fun environment."

"As we look to bond more closely with the entirety of the Naval Cadet Force and wider youth my team are looking at ways to strengthen the Royal Navy's relationship with the Sea Scouts, and we have some exciting ideas which I hope will enable us to reach out to all Sea Scout groups."



● Griff Rhys Jones, in Royal Hospital School naval uniform, with Lt Cdr Nigel Griffiths (Retd) in front of the school parade ground

School features in Griff's television tour

THE Royal Hospital School in Suffolk featured in Griff Rhys Jones' ITV series *Griff's Great Britain*.

In the second episode he explored the picturesque estuaries of Suffolk and Essex in the second leg of his journey through the British landscape.

Amongst his challenges were to eat a Colchester Native (a type of oyster), help to build a replica of the Mayflower, take part in a mud race and to learn to march at the Royal Hospital School.

Head of Ceremonial at the school, Lt Cdr (Retd) Nigel Griffiths (Retd), put Griff through his paces while Year 12 pupil and Head of School Isabelle Williams ensured that he was dressed correctly for the occasion.

RHS is a coeducational boarding and day school

for 11 to 18 year olds set in 200 acres of Suffolk countryside overlooking the River Stour.

It was established by Royal Charter more than 300 years ago, originally in London, to educate the children of seafarers and became known as the 'Cradle of the Navy'.

Today it is a mainstream independent school that accepts boys and girls from any background who go on to a wide range of universities and careers.

The school's naval heritage continues to be celebrated through traditions such as ceremonial parades on important occasions with the popular marching band and guard, and its extensive provision for sailing on Alton Water reservoir and the Suffolk waterways.



● Stella and Hannah

Twins bag top Corps qualification

TEENAGED twins from Birmingham Sherbourne unit both achieved the challenging Advanced Seamanship qualification, which only 71 Sea Cadets achieved last year.

Stella and Hannah Blizzard, 16, took on the challenge as part of the national partnership between Carnival and Sea Cadets.

Carnival Corporation & plc, parent company of P&O Cruises and Cunard, is supporting the Corps seamanship qualification, enabling cadets to broaden their career options in the maritime industry.

The qualification tests cadets on their knowledge of ropework, rigging, splicing, canvas work and decorative ropework.

Practical tests include working in a team to rig equipment such as sheer legs, gins and derricks.

Stella and Hannah, both Ordinary Cadets, joined Sherbourne unit in May 2013 when cadets carried out a fundraising bag pack at their local supermarket, and have never looked back.

Hannah said: "I will still stay on at Birmingham Sherbourne and specialise as a Seamanship Instructor – it's important to give something back when they have committed so much to you."

"Sea Cadets has opened up so many opportunities that we wouldn't otherwise have had access to."

Stella said: "I enjoyed the seamanship course because it's very practical."

"Being dyslexic can be a drawback, but being practical means this course is suitable for everybody."

"At Sea Cadets I really enjoy sailing, have gained YSS Level 4 and will be taking out our new RS Quest during May half-term to train as a sailing instructor so I can show the younger cadets how to sail."

Useful boxes

JUNIOR Cadets from Newham Cornwall VC unit donated their pocket money to buy toiletries for local homeless people as part of their community module.

They asked their senior cadets to get involved too, and together they bought essential items like shower gel, toothbrushes and deodorant to make 20 shoe boxes.

The finished boxes were donated to a temporary shelter for homeless people.

Tally vision

EVER suffered from a wonky cap tally?

That is a problem you can now put behind you, thanks to the Sea Cadet Corps and YouTube.

A five-minute video featuring cadets from Bristol Adventure unit goes through the intricacies of tying the tally and finishing the job off neatly.

See www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcW4bwXcLso for the video.



Sports Lottery Deaths

December 26: £5,000 – Lt Cdr R Stewart; £1,800 – C/Sgt G Winter; £800 – AB1 F Widdowson; £600 – AB1 A Cooperthwaite; £500 – LH1 C Cheatham; £400 – OC D Perry.
January 2: £5,000 – AB J Savage; £1,800 – Mne E Yates; £800 – AB R McNulty; £600 – Col M C Page; £500 – LH E Torá; £400 – AB J Snell.
January 9: £5,000 – CPO R Diggle; £1,800 – Cpl S Ferguson; £800 – AB J Hobday; £600 – LH S Thomas; £500 – LH S Burns; £400 – LH M Murray.
January 16: £5,000 – AB1 A Wingle; £1,800 – LH K Little; £800 – WO2 C Marshall; £600 – PO K Bailey; £500 – LH A Paxton; £400 – Cpl D Jones.
January 23: £5,000 – AB1 C Kwok; £1,800 – AB2 J Aspen; £800 – AB1 G Fynn-Carr; £600 – AB1 C Olliffe; £500 – PO W Park; £400 – CH H Briggs.
January 30: £5,000 – LH C Goddard; £1,800 – Marine L Newman; £800 – Marine E Clarke; £600 – AB D Williams; £500 – Maj B Anderson; £400 – AB T Watkinson.
February 6: £5,000 – H Bisby; £1,800 – M Hope; £800 – S Harradine; £600 – M Beasley; £500 – B Davis; £400 – D Filby.

Ask Jack

HMS Belfast: I served on HMS Belfast 1948-50. I was a boy seaman, and the youngest onboard. As such I accompanied the Captain as he visited each mess on Christmas Day. It was traditional that the youngest person would wear the Captain's coat. During the commission I was to be confirmed, but upon investigation it was shown that I had not been christened, a necessary requirement prior to confirmation. It was thus decided that I would be christened and the ceremony was conducted in the ship's chapel and the bell was used to anoint me. I had forgotten this incident until I heard you reading a recent letter concerning ship's bells. On our return to the UK we called in at Singapore. On the day preceding our departure I was taken ill with peritonitis and thus missed the ship's departure and found myself in the Military Hospital. After my operation I was sent to HMS Terror before returning home on a troopship. I wonder how many of our crew are still around? I am now in my 84th year. I enjoy all of your various letters. Thank you and keep up the good work. You can contact Peter Ford Lt RN (Retd) at Room 208, Wavertree House, Summerhill Road, Hove, West Sussex BN3 1RN
HMS/m Artful: Keith Chilton was one of the crew in the original Artful. His son, Gary, is asking if anyone remembers Keith, and if so, to get in touch. Keith also served in Scorchers. There are some images available at <https://goo.gl/dyZtlF> Contact Gary Chilton at garylchilton95@hotmail.com or tel 01707 320352.

William Howell L/Eng Tech (WESM). Joined Nov 2007. HMS Drake. Jan 5. Aged 27.
Lt J Wright RN. Joined April 2010. HMS Victorious. Jan 8. Aged 26.
Shona McKeown Band Corporal (RMBS). Joined August 1993. HMS Caledonia. Jan 10. Aged 39.
Stephen Phelps Eng Tech (WE). Joined Nov 2014. HMS Nelson. Jan 18. Aged 24.
Gen Sir Peter J F Whitely KCB. Commissioned into Royal Marines 1940 and by 1943 had served in HMS Resolution, Renown and as gun direction officer in HMS Gambia, lent to the newly-formed Royal New Zealand Navy. 1946 qualified as fixed-wing pilot and flew Seafires, Fireflies and Sea Furies. Later requalified as helicopter pilot. Starting as troop commander he rapidly rose through the Corps, becoming Adjutant 40 Cdo in Malaya (1950-51), by 1957 was Bde Major 3 Cdo Bde. Commanded 42 Cdo (1965-66) in Malaysia during Indonesian-Malaysian Confrontation, and was mentioned in despatches for repelling Indonesia's last effort (the Tebedu Incursion) to overrun Sarawak. 1966-68 he led the Commandant General's staff, then attended NATO Defence College in Rome. Promoted brigadier 1968 he commanded 3 Cdo Bde. 1979-84 he was Lt Governor and Commander in Chief of Jersey; he spoke French, Italian, Malay and Norwegian. Awarded KCB 1976, GCB and Knight of Justice of the Order of St John 1979, a *chevalier* of L'Ordre de la Pléiade in 1981 and Deputy Lt of Devon in 1987. February 2. Aged 95.
Cdr Stephen J Chick CBE. HMS Avenger, Leeds Castle, Edinburgh, Minerva, Ark Royal, Nottingham, Chatham, Illustrious, Dryad, RNEC Manadon, NATO Naples, ACDS Pol USA. FO Surface Flotilla. Jan 9. Aged 55.
Maj Vivian St G T Connolly. HMS Afrikander, Falcon, President, Osiris, Sussex, Assegai, Nile, RM Deal, Chatham, Amphibious Warfare HQ, MOD Plans Division. Jan 1. Aged 97.
Cdr John 'Johnnie' Shriver Pilot FAA. Joined 1949 and flew 25 aircraft types, including Barracuda, Avenger, Skyraider, Meteor, Whirlwind, Sea King and Wasp. Embarked in HMS Eagle, Centaur and Victorious; BWC/ONC HMS Redpole and XO HMS Daedalus (73-75). Jan 29. Aged 84.
Cdr Edward H Chittleburgh. HMS Eagle, Cerberus, Superb, Collingwood, President, Falcon and RNC Greenwich. Jan 16. Aged 94.
Cdr Brian E Rowley SCC. HMS Hermes, Devonshire, Antrim, London, Victorious, Centaur, Sea Eagle, Osprey, Seahawk, Heron and Defence Op Analysis West Byleet. Jan 18. Aged 76.
Cdr Michael C Spencer. HMS Fife, Hermes, Owen, Vanguard, Cleopatra, Newfoundland, Theseus, Ricasoli, Swiftsure, Terror, Drake, Centurion, Victory RNB and MOD DNOR. Jan 27.
Lt Cdr Margaret Brooke Naval Nurse. Returning from leave aboard the ferry Caribou when it was sunk by U-69 off Newfoundland in 1942. She clung to an

overturned lifeboat, holding on to her friend until morning when a wave pulled her away. Appointed MBE (Military) in 1943 for her 'gallantry and courage whilst in the water in attempting to save the life of another Nursing Sister.' Post-war she remained in the Royal Canadian Navy, retiring 1962. On her 100th birthday the RCN announced it would be naming one of its new Arctic Patrol Vessels the Margaret Brooke. January 9. Aged 100.
Lt Cdr Laurence G Turner. Forth, Tireless, Trusty and RNEC Plymouth. Jan 5.
Lt Cdr Peter R Gordon-Smith. HMS Glamorgan, Hermes, Victorious, Soberton, Parapet, Russell, Cambrian, Saker, Heron and Dryad. Jan 17.
Lt Cdr Jack D Durban RNR. HMS Raneer, Golden Hind and 816 NAS. Jan 16.
Lt Cdr Kenneth W Cobley DSC. HMS Curlew, Ranpura, Tyne, Hornbill, Rapid, Norfolk, Duke of York, Newcastle and Daedalus. Jan 20. Aged 101.
Lt Robin M 'Dan' Carter. 802, 807, 808, 771 and 700 NAS. Dec 31.
Sub Lt Anna E Bolam QARNNS. HMS Drake. Dec 20. Aged 28.
Sub Lt Maurice G Casling RNRV. 786 and 816 NAS. Dec.
Cedric M 'Spyda' Webb CPO. Served 1964-99. St Vincent as a Junior Electrical Mechanic 2nd Class with further training at Daedalus then Seahawk, HMS Albion (67-68), Arethusa (72-74), Osprey, HMS Norfolk (78-79). Excellent & Daedalus Field Gun crew and trainer (79-85), Heron and Osprey. Represented RN Rugby Union and the first and only NCO to be selector (1997-99 seasons). Played in both 1972 Inter-Services games as part of an all-Fleet Air Arm front row and 1976 for his third and final cap. Jan 26. Aged 67.
Edward 'Ted' T Fitt CPO GI. Served 1956-81 in HMS Ceylon, Tiger, Puma, Gurkha, Arethusa, Ashanti, Bulwark, Excellent and Collingwood. Jan 15. Aged 74.
Ian 'Jan' Janes PO. Served 1945-59 at St George and Ganges, also HMS Wrangler, Illustrious, Vanguard, Vervan Bay, Opossum and Alaunia, then 35 years Bristol Police. HMS Opossum Association. Jan 20. Aged 86.
Tom 'Stumpy' Bateman POEL. Served 1963-85 HMS Lincoln & Eastbourne (Far East Fleet), Hermes, Brighton, Tartar, Salisbury and Phoebe, also Collingwood Sultan and Drake. HMS Phoebe Association. Feb 3. Aged 74.
Kenneth 'Spud' Taylor RM. Served 1943-46 in HMS Euryalus Home Fleet then the British Pacific Fleet involved in attacks on Palembang oil refineries and Okinawa and landed in Hong Kong as part of the repatriation force before Japan's official surrender Sept 1945. Royal Marines Association for over 60 years, also HMS Euryalus Association. Jan 8. Aged 90.
Sidney 'Sid' Goodall LM(E). Served HMS Kenya and Virago ship's diving team. RN Engineer Association. Feb 5. Aged 81.
Robert Calnan Sto.1. HMS Implacable (1947) and HMS Hind. Royal Naval Engineer Association. Jan 14. Aged 89.
Alan Wright Stoker. Served aboard

HMS Cheviot 1956 and a member of the association. Jan 7.
Frank Sheldon. Trained at Royal Arthur and in HMS Glendower, also served HMS Bloomingdale, Victory, Royal Charlotte (MMS 275). Jack Dusty in the Royal Arthur Association that disbanded in 2006. Dec 31.
Paul Jones AB Seaman Gunner. Served 1952-77 in HMS Loch Fada (56-58) East Indies & Persian Gulf, Loch Killisport, Glasserton, Lion, Alert, Meon, Minerva, Eastbourne, Eskimo, Londonderry, Fife, also Ganges training & ships' company (x3) and Excellent (x3). Loch Fada Association. January 15. Aged 79.
Stanley Cheveralls AB. On board HMS Cheviot 1949 and a member of the association. Dec 28.
John Snowball. Served in HMS Jamaica 1942, Vanguard, Diana and Cavendish. D-Boats Association. January.
Royal Naval Association
Edward Thompson MEM1. Served 1967-78 in HMS Triumph and Relentless. St Helens branch. October. Aged 65.
Eric Chrickmore Telegrapher. Served 1943-47. HMS Bermuda (Far East Fleet). St Helens branch. January. Aged 90.
Thomas 'Tom' Cope RM. Served 1959-67 at Deal, Aden and the Radfan Campaign; also HMS Bulwark. Joined Trafford RNA 1992 holding posts of vice chairman and chairman; paraded the branch standard on many occasions, and for a number of years the Area 10 Standard. November. Aged 74.
William 'Billy' Hilton L/Sto. Served 1940-45 in HMS Victory, Collingwood, Southern Prince and Berwick. Eastbourne branch. Dec. Aged 101.
Robert 'Don' Dommersnes CCY. Served 1953-75. Joined HMS Ganges as a boy signalman and served in HMS Delight and Loch Lomond, returning to Ganges as an instructor (69-71). As CCY to F02 he served aboard many ships. Birchington-on-Sea RNA. Dec 31. Aged 78.
Harry Clarkson Seaman. Served WW2 on board HMS Loch Insh on Arctic and North Russian Convoys. Wrexham branch. January 7. Aged 90.
Norman Dicker. Associate member and former Treasurer of Cheshunt branch.

Reunions

May
HMS Wizard & Cadiz Association reunion at the Inglewood Palm Hotel, Torquay, May 6-9. Membership open to all who served in Battle-class V & W destroyers and Type 15 frigates. Contact Jim Watkins at jimandleah@hotmail.co.uk, tel 01872 274419 or write to 10 Trewidden Close, Truro, Cornwall TR1 1LN.
HMS Hermione Association reunion May 20-22 at Best Western Feathers Hotel, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool. All welcome, including families of those lost onboard. If you are planning to book call 0151 709 9655 and quote ref: Hermione Association.
HMS Coventry D118 (F182) Association reunion May 21-22 at the Gls Association, Whale Island. Muster for church service at 1015 at the Still & West public house, Old Portsmouth, on Sunday. Details can be found at www.hmscoventry.co.uk/reunion.php or contact Chris Howe at chris.howe@systematic.com
Battle of Jutland Centenary Service at St James Church, Emsworth, at 1100 on May 31. Contact David Smith at davidgeosmith@hotmail.com or tel 023 9236 2804.
June
HMS Liverpool Association reunion June 11 at the Gls Association, Whale Island, mustering at 1200. Association includes those who served on the cruiser and the Type 42 destroyer and new members are always welcome. For information and membership details contact John Parker at info@hmsliverpoolassociation.org.uk or tel 023 9252 1222.
July
763 King Squad 1961 55th anniversary reunion (with buffet); meet at 7pm on July 23 at RMA, Dunn Close, Southsea, PO4 9SB. If you are able to attend or if you would like details, contact Chas Timms at charlestimms2@gmail.com or tel 07973 658188.
September
HMS/m Swiftsure (Swiftsure 86 + 30) first reunion to be held September 3 at the Weston Mill Social Club, Plymouth. £5 per person, buffet included. All who served onboard, including partners, welcome. Contact antonybadman@hotmail.co.uk or tel 07725 782859.
HMS Ark Royal Communicators 1973-1977 15th reunion in Bristol from September 9. Contact Jeremy Smith at the group website www.groups.yahoo.com/neo/group/hma-ark-royal/info or jsmith@greenford5.fsnet.co.uk or 5, West Ridge Gardens, Greenford, Middlesex, UB6 9PE or tel 07789 375611.
HMS Crane Association U23/F123 (1942-62) reunion and AGM at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel (formerly the Gateway Hotel), Nottingham, from September 23-25. All ex-Cranes and friends welcome. Details from Joe Smith at cranebird@btinternet.com or Tony Nuttall on 0115 987 4362.
HMS Tiger Association (C20) reunion will take place at the Heronston Hotel, Bridport, from September 23-26. Details from D Andrew on 01262 670860.
October
HMS Tartar Association annual reunion at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, from October 7-10. All ex-Tartars and wives are welcome. Bookings arranged by IOW Tours on 01983 405116 – contact

January. Aged 84.
Leonard Lines. Member of Norwich RNA. Jan 9. Aged 91.
David 'Dave' Tollerton LM(E). Served HMS Ark Royal (x2), Eagle, Tyne and Neptune. Chairman of Crosby RNA, also chairman of Area 10 (North West) RNA and a member of the RN Engineer Association. Feb 4. Aged 70.
Association of RN Officers and RNO
Cdr John Hamilton. HMS Dryad, Cleopatra, Fife, Lynx, Messina, Termagant, HMNZS Kiwi, HMNZS Rotoiti, Finisterre, Victory RNB, President, Ganges, HMV Britannia. Jan 14. Aged 87.
Lt Keith Howard. HMS Sultan, Centurion, Rooke, Pembroke, Minerva, Hydra, Maidstone, Achilles, RNEC Plymouth. Oct 31.
Lt Cdr David W Pennick. HMS Gannet, Albatross, Goshawk, 737 NAS, MOD Chief of Naval Information, Air Warfare Division. Jan 13. Aged 97.
Lt Cdr Joseph K Shaw RNR. Unattached. Jan 6. Aged 90.
Lt V A White RNRV. Dec 16.
Submariners Association
David 'Dave' Summers CPO. Served HMS Glasgow, Cygnet, Coquette and in HM Submarines Aurochs, Thorough, Alaric, Alcide, Anchorite, Truncheon, Grampus, Cachalot, Finwhale and Oracle. Ex-chairman and ex-secretary of Nottingham branch, also a member of HMS Bruce Association. January 9. Aged 84.
Peter G Bailey AB RP2. Served 1944-47 in HM Submarines Upshot and Varne. President of West Bromwich & Brierley Hill branch. Feb 2. Aged 91.
Fleet Air Arm Association
Ben Brooks AM(L). Served 1944-47. Bristol & District branch. Jan 8.
George Bice POAF(A). Served 1943-46. Bristol & District branch. Jan 27. Aged 93.
Gerald Hutson RELMN1(A). Served 1952-70 in Triumph, Fulmar, Simbang 848 NAS, Ariel Warrington, Ariel Worthy Down, Heron, Daedalus 702 and 727 NAS, Goldcrest, Comus, Victorious 893 NAS and Undaunted. Solent branch. Feb 1.
William Yates LAM(E). Served 1942-46. St Helens branch.

linpowe@btinternet.com
Bay Class Frigates Association reunion at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, from October 17-19. All ex-Bay class men and guests welcome. Contact Doug Turk at doug.turk@ntlworld.com or tel 01252 378629.
HMS Undaunted/Eagle/Yarmouth Associations reunion takes place October 21-24 at the Tillington Hall Hotel, Staffordshire. Visit to the National Memorial Arboretum on the 22nd is being arranged. This reunion is open to anyone interested, especially those served in the 2nd Flotilla squadron based at Portland. Contact Bryan Durber at bryan32@virginmedia.com or tel 01215 508458
Survey Ships Association reunion October 28-31 at the Aztec Hotel, Bristol. For information on membership and reunion send an SAE to the Secretary SSA, 17 Eliza Mackenzie Court, Lindisfarne Close, Cosham, Portsmouth PO6 2SB, email secretary@surveyships.org.uk or tel 023 9232 4795.

Entries for the Deaths and Reunions columns, and for Swap Drafts, in April's Noticeboard must be received by **March 11**

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New Ceres to watch in Leeds

THE White Ensign flies over Yorkshire's largest city once again after Princess Anne helped Yorkshire's only Royal Naval Reserve unit celebrate its formal commissioning.

The Princess Royal was guest of honour as the headquarters of HMS Ceres in Leeds was officially dedicated in its latest incarnation with full Naval pomp and ceremony.

Ceres has existed in various forms as a Naval establishment in Yorkshire over the past 70 years, most recently as the hub for members of the Royal Naval Reserve.

For the past 11 years it's been housed at Carlton Barracks, on the northern edge of Leeds city centre, as a satellite unit of first Nottingham's RNR unit HMS Sherwood and, until last year, HMS Calliope on Tyneside.

Now it's a reserve headquarters in its own right, used by 80 men and women who give up their spare time to serve

their nation – with the goal of raising numbers to 100 in the next couple of years.

Some £600,000 has been spent refurbishing the existing building occupied by the sailors and adding a new two-storey wing and accommodation block, providing Ceres with new training and classroom facilities and 12 permanent bed spaces.

The Princess Royal dedicated those facilities in front of civic dignitaries, government officials and, most importantly, the ship's company of HMS Ceres while the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Plymouth provided the appropriate nautical music which filled the drill hall (the parade ground was ruled out due to the inclement weather).

"I was honoured to take part in the ceremony – it's an historic moment which we'll remember for years to come," said 18-year-old Able Seaman Gaby Blackburn from Huddersfield

and a member of the 24-strong Royal Guard. She has recently completed her basic training alongside regular recruits at HMS Raleigh in Cornwall.

"It's something that not many people get to do, and I'm proud to have my dad, someone very close to me, watch me do it."

LS Rob Kendrick, 38, from Halifax, added: "I feel very proud to be in the Royal Guard – and I'm very proud of the unit and the people in it. They always go above and beyond what is required."

Lt Cdr David Noakes, the unit's Commanding Officer, said Ceres had developed a "strong family ethos" over the past 11 years as it grew from a small sub-unit to a formation ready to stand on its own two feet.

"As the Royal Navy's main presence in Yorkshire, HMS Ceres is well placed to meet the requirements of an expanding Reserve and is proud of the diversity of its ship's company reflecting a modern

Navy and, in particular, the growing number of female recruits it is able to attract."

"The ship's company are excited by their achievements, looking forward to the future, and regard it a great honour that the Princess Royal agreed to be present at the commissioning ceremony."

As part of Ceres' rebirth, the ship's bell bearing the name – held by HMS Raleigh in Cornwall – has been transferred to Yorkshire and was presented to Lt Cdr Noakes.

It belonged to the WW1/WW2 light cruiser, then ended up at the new RN supply and secretariat school HMS Ceres in Wetherby, where it stayed until that training moved to Raleigh, home of instruction for what is today known as the logistics branch.

For those interested in signing up for a career in the RNR with Ceres, its personnel hold recruitment evenings at Carlton Barracks from 8pm on the last Thursday of every month.

Pictures: LA(Phot) Luron Wright



The view from above of those down below (Flat) top reading

SO IT'S back to the merciless grey wastes of the unforgiving ocean and the struggle between U-boat and convoy again.

Three decades of research have gone into Churchill's Greatest Fear: The Battle of the Atlantic September 3 1939 to May 7 1945 (Pen and Sword, £25 ISBN 1473-834-007), penned by Richard Doherty, one of Ireland's foremost and most prolific military historians.

He conducted interviews with veterans on both sides back in the 1980s, and has spent a very considerable amount of time in the National Archives in Kew ploughing through the papers of the Admiralty, Air Ministry and Prime Minister, plus the hundreds of intercepted German radio signals (the famed Ultra documents from Bletchley Park).

His 314-page work mostly, though not exclusively, looks at Britain's decisive battle of WW2 through tactical and strategic eyes of those directing affairs down to the escort commanders accompanying the convoys and U-boat skippers, rather than the ordinary matelot or U-bootsmann.

And that makes for something of an interesting change and perspective as a lot of the focus in recent writings has been on the human history of the battle, not the higher level of co-ordinating it.

Another difference is the author's regular use of figures, diagrams and graphics to depict – in clear, simple terms – some of the vessels which fought the battle, and some of the tactics used such as 'the raspberry' (so called because the RN was blowing one at Hitler...) used earlier in the campaign, through to the highly-successful 'creeping barrage' used to devastating effect later in the war by the legendary Capt Johnnie Walker.

As for the title, well Doherty argues that Churchill was slow to realise the U-boat threat – it was February 1941 before the Battle of the Atlantic Committee was formed – and slow to realise the importance of air power, especially long-range air power.

But then Churchill, both as First Lord of the Admiralty and later as PM, was starting the 'game' with a poor hand, for inter-war politicians had been slow to respond to the growing danger posed by Nazi Germany – and provide the Forces accordingly.

With the war in its final weeks and the battle effectively won, Churchill's successor as First Lord – the political head of the RN – AV Alexander warned his contemporaries that strangling Britain's supply lines was Hitler's "best hope of averting defeat against a nation which lives by seaborne supplies". Seven decades later, and in a considerably-changed world, the sealanes remain both our lifeline and our Achilles heel.

Thanks to the publishers, we have five copies of Churchill's Greatest Fear to give away.

To win, tell us the name of the liner sunk off Scotland by the Germans on the very first day of the war.

Send your answer to churchill@navynews.co.uk or Churchill Competition, Navy News, Mail Point 1-4, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY.

Entries must be received by mid-day on April 13 2016.



LAST year's SDRS emphasised the future importance of carrier strike – a role that has a long history in the Royal Navy.

That is discussed by Cdr David Hobbs, one of the major historians of British naval aviation, in his *The British Carrier Strike Fleet After 1945* (Seaforth, £35 ISBN 978-1848-321-717) writes Prof Eric Grove.

The title led me at first to expect a focussed account of the British contribution to the NATO Striking Fleet in the Cold War period. Instead, Cdr Hobbs has produced a more general history of British carrier capability after 1945, including operations East Of Suez, (which was indeed the main deployment area for carrier strike after 1957) and commando as well as strike carriers.

This makes for an interesting and useful, if rather long, book of no fewer than 622 pages. There are, however important gaps, for example on the Naval Staff's skilful defence of the NATO Striking Fleet concept in 1957-8 against Defence Minister Duncan Sandys and the evolution, almost 30 years later, of the CVS led Anti-Submarine Striking Force out of the British Carrier Group 2 of the NATO Striking Fleet.

Yet the book could have been significantly shorter. There is too much material on the political background to operations which is not really necessary and is sometimes not as well informed as it should be. For example, the discussion of Suez 1956 (a wonderful example of the utility of carriers that, as the author correctly argues, had important positive policy impact) makes no direct mention of Operation Cordage, the plan to attack Israel if it attacked Jordan. This has been fully publicised for some

THE GROVE REVIEW

years now – not least in my own work. As the author alludes to in passing, the deployed British forces were not quite sure about whom they were going to fight until just before operations against Egypt began.

Sometimes, the diversion verges on self indulgence. There is a whole 27-page chapter on the British nuclear deterrent which has little relevance to the book's subject, except in so far as carrier-based aircraft could have provided alternatives and did provide a supplement. There was indeed discussion in Whitehall of the utility of carrier-based Buccaneers versus the V-bombers that would have been very relevant, but sadly it does not appear here. More should also have been made of the Mountbatten Board of Admiralty's equivocal attitude to a fully independent British nuclear deterrent, especially if it meant sinking resources in the black holes of the Blue Streak missile silos the book covers in some detail.

The author is a clear advocate of 'The Fleet Air Arm View of History' and the RAF generally appear as the villains of the piece. This is often true and the author's points on the different cultures of the two Services are well made, but one does get the feeling reading the book that the Crabs are always wrong. They often are, of course, but it seems rather unfair, for example, to say that the RAF in 1918 neglected naval aviation when it provided, for the first time, a decent quantity

of aeroplanes for operation with the Grand Fleet – something the Admiralty had signally failed to do. There were also fundamental existential strategic factors that led Britain to pioneer an independent air service. Nevertheless, Cdr Hobbs' basic point that carriers provide a level of self sustaining, mobile air power that land based forces cannot approach, is always worth making.

The author has played a distinguished role in the story he recounts and this adds important depth to his analyses at several levels – both policy-related and tactical. He has also helped prepare staff histories on such subjects as the carrier controversy of the 1960s which gives his account authority, although other sources might have been addressed. The discussion of policy in the vital 1960s period is rather confusingly presented and not enough is made of the plans for a joint RAF/RN carrier force. The importance of the Navy's official adoption of the RAF version of the P1154 fighter in obtaining initial approval of the new carrier has been overlooked. The Naval Staff's traditionalist liking for new helicopter cruisers in weakening the case for carriers is, however, well made and thought-provoking, as is the author's point that smaller carriers such as Leviathan and Centaur should have been retained to fulfil the roles carried out less effectively by the cruisers Blake and Tiger.

The story is brought up to date with an account of the

current carrier strike programme. The author is not too happy with the way the programme has been managed. He has a point, but his account would have had more authority if a bit more detail had been provided.

There is a major book to be written on the CVF programme. My suspicions about the limits of the 'future proofing' of the design are confirmed by the issue Cdr Hobbs points out about the types of catapult and arrestor gear planned for this version of the design. The French, who were very helpful in the early design stage when they planned to build a similar ship, almost certainly envisaged steam catapults rather than electrical. Going for the latter inflated costs enormously, resulting in a reversion to STOVL.

I cannot agree, however, with the author's assertion that going for the F-18 with 'cats and traps' would have been a sensible policy. The F-35B Lightning II is a much superior aircraft; a smaller number of these machines have the same striking power as a larger number of the older design. It also has a significant amount of British input in terms of both construction and avionics.

The illustrations are numerous and interesting. The dust jacket colour picture of Victorious, Hermes and Ark Royal operating together as they did in 1960 is a magnificent reminder of things past. *The British Carrier Strike Fleet After 1945* is an important contribution to the history of the Royal Navy after 1945. Better editing and greater focus would have improved the book significantly, but all readers will gain something from it and it is well worth £35 – and even more so the £18 being asked by some internet sellers.



Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins

ATHLETES from HMS Sultan swept the board at the Royal Navy Eastern Region Cross-Country Championships.

HMS Excellent, Collingwood, Sultan and HMNB Portsmouth contributed runners to the event, held at Sultan in Gosport, in an attempt to claim victory in their individual respective categories and as an establishment overall, with the top ten participants going on to the Navy Championships at HMS Raleigh.

The event, which began on Sultan's polo field, saw 76 competitors run the course which led them across the base after receiving a short briefing from organiser LPT Liam Saunders.

The course was different this year due to the intended location being waterlogged, allowing the runners the opportunity to see new parts of Sultan, such as the forts, granges and the goats that live on the base.

Collingwood finished second with HMNB Portsmouth in third place.

"It's a great feeling to see our runners succeed and keep the trophy on home ground," said LPT Saunders.

Results: U23 women: ETME Benson (Sultan); U23 men: AET Gargan (Sultan); Senior women: Lt Ashton (Sultan); Senior men: AB Stoker (Portsmouth); Women's veterans: CPO Dryhurst (Sultan); Men's veterans: Lt Hernden.

Navy's magnificent seven



● Lt Craig Guest finished second in the men's heavyweight 30-plus 2k
Pictures: Anne Yates

SEVEN medals and a host of personal and seasonal bests were the result for the Royal Navy Indoor Rowing team at the English championships at Manchester Velodrome.

Lt Craig Guest (FOST, HMS Collingwood) backed up his recent Euro Championships win with second place in the men's heavyweight 30-plus 2k with a time of six minutes 17.4 seconds, rowing his fifth consecutive personal best, knocking two seconds from his previous personal best.

Lt Cdr Jim Thomson (HMS Lancaster) showed that a nine-month deployment had not affected his competitive spirit as he finished third in six minutes 23.3 seconds in the men's heavyweight 40-plus 2k. He went on to claim silver in the men's heavyweight 20-plus 500m in one minute 22 seconds.

CPO Collin Leiba (MCTA), aka Mr Plymouth 1992, rowed two seconds faster than his bronze performance at the Euros to finish third in his 2k with a time of six minutes 35.9 seconds.

WO1 Andy Patience (Collingwood) was seventh in the same race with a time of six minutes 58 seconds.

CPO Leiba was later an easy winner of his 500m open heavyweight category in one minute 19.6 seconds.

CPO Med Tech Claire McLennan (MDHU) applied herself really well in her first competitive race to finish third in

the women's 30-plus heavyweight 2k in a personal best time of seven minutes 49.7 seconds.

Leading Diver Willy Bowman (HMS Excellent) held on to win his men's 30-plus heavyweight 500 metres in one minute 21.3 seconds – just. Pulling 1.13/1.14 500m pace strokes for as long as he could, he paid an extreme anaerobic price in the final 150m, but held on to win by 0.3 seconds from two faster-finishing bosuns.

Nineteen-year-old AB Tom Walker (HMS Raleigh) rowed to a superb fourth place in the men's heavyweight open 2k in a time of six minutes 24.4 seconds. Pushing hard for third, Tom led home the other rowers – ET(WE) Alastair Packman (HMS Nelson) in six minutes 32.9 seconds, Lt Rory McAlpine (HMS Lancaster) in six minutes 34 seconds and Capt Ed Williams (JFIG) in six minutes 49.5 seconds.

The positive effects of the team's adherence to coach LPT Ollie Osborne's (RNAS Culdrose) structured training was further indicated by personal bests for POPT Daz Hoare (Collingwood), with a fifth place in the men's 40-plus heavyweight with a time of six minutes 27 seconds, and WO1 PT Tiny Nash (Nelson) with a time of six minutes 33.9 seconds in the same race.

Tiny turns 50 this year and will move up to challenge CPO Leiba.

The RN team had 16 rowers competing in the World Indoor Rowing Championships in Boston as *Navy News* went to press.



● CPO Claire McLennan finished third in the women's 30-plus heavyweight 2k

Women don't take prisoners

THE Royal Navy **Rugby Union** Women emerged 57-0 victors against HM Prison Service Women in their most convincing win in two years, *writes communications manager David Martin.*

The RN Women started aggressively, going into contact with the forwards recycling the ball quickly and the backs being given clean ball by scrum half Oli Critchley.

The RN made quick ground early, allowing skipper Charlotte Fredrickson to take a short pop ball off a ruck and attack the Prison Service's defensive line.

Poor tackling coupled with strong running saw her ease over the line to put the first points on the board.

Loogle Worsfold added the extra two points making it 7-0 after three minutes.

From the restart the RN Women continued with direct and decisive rugby and it wasn't long before some effective handling by Nicola Elvidge at outside half saw Georgia Rowley break the Prison Service with a lovely angled run and go over for a try, which was also successfully converted (14-0).

Again, straight from the restart, the RN Women were in full flow leaving the Prison Service somewhat dumbstruck, a powerful breakthrough by Worsfold saw her with a clear run from 30 metres out, which she successfully converted, making it 21-0.

The Prison Service started to compete more strongly in rucks and made ground into the RN Women's half through a series of penalties. They were unable to make any significant impact with the RN Women holding tight in defence and keeping the Prison Service out of the RN 22-metre area.



● RNRU(W) skipper Charlotte Fredrickson

This pressure was short lived and the RN Women went back on the attack making some good territory with the boot of Nicola Elvidge and pressure by winger Billi Stait and fullback Kirsty Marlor.

This pressure allowed Oli Critchley to pick from the ruck and attack the blind side to run in another try, the subsequent conversion was missed (26-0).

It wasn't long before the Prison Service were caught unawares by the nimble Critchley, who used her speed and agility again to good effect to go over for her second try of the match. This time it was successfully converted by Worsfold, making it 33-0. As half time approached, some strong rucking

coupled with effective picking up off the back of rucks saw Pippa Hutchinson attack a gap inside the Prison Service's ten-metre line. A strong runner, she fended off two opposition players before beating the final defender with speed to make it 38-0. A small slip from Worsfold saw the ball hit both uprights from the conversion but fall the wrong side of the cross bar.

The second half started in much the same way as the first half finished with the RN Women attacking the Prison Service from the outset, running good angles and exposing the weakening defence.

It wasn't long before some effective handling opened up a gap into which substitute Drew Powell accelerated and went over for a well-worked try. The subsequent conversion was missed but the scoreboard kept creeping up; 43-0.

From the re-start the RN Women made yet another impact with Fredrickson breaking free and going over the line whilst the Prison Service's defender, making an excellent tackle, prevented the try from being scored.

The RN Women made further changes in the second half and one of them, Stacey Hargrave, attacked the Prison Service centre pairing, breaking through with ease and beating the chasing defenders to the put the RN Women within reach of the 50-point mark.

Worsfold made it so with an excellent kick and the RN Women were 50 points to the good (50-0). With around 15 minutes to go Fredrickson went over for her second try of the match, the conversion sailed between the posts and the score was 57-0.



Stylish debut

HMS Sutherland's **football** team debuted their new kit in style – a ten-goal thriller against HMS Bulwark.

The match, held at HMNB Devonport, was the Type 23's first fixture of the new year and saw Sutherland's players don their new kit, purchased through Kitworld.com

LPT Mark 'Shiner' Wright said the five-all result was fair, adding that hopefully the new kit will bring the team some luck throughout the year.

Dinner delivers punch

THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Ex-Boxers Association is holding its charity dinner and **boxing** show in May.

Boxing at the event at the Pyramids Centre in Southsea, Portsmouth, on Friday May 22 will see the Royal Navy boxing team taking on a Southern Counties side.

Former world light

heavyweight champion John Conteh and former WBC super middleweight Richie Woodall, along with former Royal Marine Terry Marsh, world champion in the light welterweight division, will be among the spectators.

For details about tickets contact Alan Dolman on 023 9248 3388.

Teamwork key to success in marathon

MEMBERS of Mine Countermeasures (MCM) Crew 5 in HMS Chiddingfold celebrated the end of their first month back in the Kipion Joint Operating Area by competing in the Bahrain marathon.

Lt Scott Hamer, the ship's Executive Officer, ran the full 26.2 miles in an impressive time of three hours and 13 minutes, achieving fourth place overall and first place in his age category.

The achievement is particularly impressive when you consider that there is no running machine on board Chiddingfold, and training opportunities to get fit for the marathon have been limited with the ship being at sea.

The ship entered two teams of runners in the relay team event.

The first team, known as the 'bubbleheads', performed exceptionally well, finishing in first place. Team members included CO Lt Cdr Steve White, Lt Rob Stone-Ward, PO 'Ken' Barlow from Chiddingfold, as well as Lt Pete Needle, the Operations Officer of HMS Penzance.

The second team of runners, also from Chiddingfold, included the ship's two young officers, Sub Lt Sam Alonso-Beardmore and Joe Holt, as well as Lt Beau Henrickson and Lt Chris Keeble; all completed the race in good time but were unfortunately out of the placings.

Lt Cdr White said: "Working as a team is the cornerstone of life in the RN so I'm very pleased with winning first place in the relay team event.

"Fitness is also hugely important and not everyone likes running, so well done to my new young officers for getting into the team spirit. However a huge BZ to my XO for the grit and perseverance, a great effort with limited time to train."

Three out of four isn't bad at all

THREE out of four Royal Navy hockey teams claimed victories in the Inter-Service Indoor Hockey Championship.

Hot on the heels of the RN Women's Masters historic first victory over the RAF, the RN Senior Women's Indoor team beat the light blues 6-1, with Midshipman Leah Payne grabbing a hat-trick. Musn Alice Hudson scored twice with Lt Rachael Clark also getting on the scoresheet.

The victory meant both the RN and the Army would proceed to the National Indoor Hockey League play-off, where the Navy just missed out on a division two place for the 2016 season.

The Royal Navy Men's Masters beat the Army 5-3 in the first match of the Inter-Service Indoor Men's Masters contest before going on to beat the RAF 5-2, giving the RN the title for the first time in a few years.

The Under-25 contest saw the Royal Navy outgunned by the RAF, who won 7-6. RN goals came from Chris Simms (three), Mark Vivian, George Davis and Ben Flint.

The Men's Senior side overcame a 2-1 half-time deficit to beat the RAF 4-2, with goals from Mne Kyle Pinnock (two), Mne Craig Buchanan and LPT Rowan Edwards.

The RN then faced the Army and recorded a comprehensive 6-3 victory to take the title.

Tignes Team

Navy athletes show skills on slopes

THE bright blue sky belies the difficult conditions faced by Royal Navy skiers and snowboarders in the French Alps, writes LA (Phot) Joel Rouse.

With 94cm of snowfall, snow depth at 190cm, and temperatures down to -33°C, conditions were always going to be tough for beginners and experts alike.

In the picturesque Tarentaise Valley of the French Alps lies the region of Tignes, the winter wonderland location for the annual Royal Navy Winter Sports Association (RNWSA) Alpine Championships.

More than 1,000 Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel were welcomed to Val Claret, the highest village in Tignes and venue for all races, by Championship Director Cdr Nick Howard to test their skills on the snow, from complete beginners to the experts of the Royal Navy Ski Team.

Cdr Howard, delivering his welcome address in a blizzard, said: "Blood, sweat and tears have gone into organising the Alpine Championships, and the reward is seeing individuals take the opportunity to challenge themselves and experience the thrill of alpine racing."

Set over two weeks, the Alpine Championships provides both tuition and racing. From the complete beginner, who has never stepped foot on a snowboard or into a pair of ski boots, to the advanced athlete with many years' experience on snow, there is tuition available to everyone. Lessons are categorised into beginner, novice, and intermediate and advanced for skiers; and beginner, novice, and intermediate for the snowboarders.

Whether you are a seasoned winter sports enthusiast or an absolute beginner, there is an extensive range of races to get involved in. These events form a key part of the championships and include boarder-cross, skier-cross, slope style snowboarding, slalom, giant and super giant slalom.

Each event is designed to test a particular ability level so everyone, regardless of skill level can ski or board for glory.

With the arrival of the RN Ski Team from their training camp in La Rosaire in the second week, the intensity increased with additional speed and technical races added, notably the Super Giant Slalom (Super 'G') and Premier Super 'G'.

The team from HMS Queen Elizabeth narrowly beat the Royal Naval Reserve Air Branch to take the major unit winner title.

Navy Air won the regional competition while the overall woman victor was Lt Holly Henderson, with Surg Lt Barbara Mair the runner-up.

Lt Chris Sharrott, from the Defence Helicopter

Flying School, took the overall men's title, with Std Brett Wilde of HMS Ambush, second.

The Alpine Championships is one of the highlights of the Royal Navy's sporting calendar and, thanks to the involvement of the Naval Outdoor Centre Germany, is also one of many Adventurous Training (AT) opportunities for Royal Navy personnel.

Novice skiing is considered to be AT as it provides personnel with the opportunity to test themselves in a range of activities designed to take them beyond their comfort zone, present a significant challenge and push individuals in unfamiliar surroundings.

In addition to those learning to ski or board from scratch, all competitors are tested and pushed during lessons and ultimately racing courses that take them to, at times, uncomfortable speeds.

LAET Dave Shears said: "One of the highlights of the champs is the beginners' race. For many, they've never tried their hand at winter sports, so to race, or slide, down a floodlit piste, can be a big obstacle to overcome. And we've seen these guys develop over the week, so it's rewarding to see them have the confidence to race in front of a large crowd."

Often pushing the boundaries are the snowboarders. Their events, such as the Slopestyle, can be quite dangerous and usually take the attributes of an adrenalin junkie to succeed. For those wanting to get involved in this particular discipline it is worth pointing out that the wearing of beanies during indoor après is mandatory for all snowboarders.

POPT Lucy McKenna, RN Snowboard team manager, said: "Snowboarding is a rad sport that appeals to all sorts of people, whether you want to ride fast, hit the park or just have fun. It also comes with risk and when training for competition half the battle is getting over your own fears in order to perform well and not get injured!"

As well as providing the perfect backdrop to train and race, the Alpine Champs also offers the Royal Navy Ski and Snowboard teams the perfect location to scout for new talent from across the Senior Service and prepare the teams for (hopefully) Inter-Service success.

Lt Holly Henderson, RN women's ski team captain, said: "Having the opportunity to captain the team for a third year running is a real privilege and honour. The team has a positive,

can do attitude, and have pushed their limits every step of the way during the time spent in the Alps. The Alpine Champs also helps us to prepare for the Inter-Service Championships in Meribel."

The championships were officially closed by Second Sea Lord Vice-Admiral Jonathan Woodcock on completion of Super Giant Slalom Friday and were considered a huge success.

This year will be remembered for the very challenging blizzard conditions of week one and the start of

week two, some fantastic racing and some spectacular crashes.

A truly fantastic event which would not have been possible without the generous support of the sponsors, in particular, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

Next year's championships will aim to increase the participation of RN personnel, with the RNWSA targeting ships and units at intermediate and advanced levels.

Pictures: LA(Phot)s Joel Rouse and Dan Rosenbaum



Riders under starter's orders

SAILORS, Royal Marines, soldiers and airmen can enjoy a day at the races (but not a night at the opera) at the 151st **Grand Military Race Meeting**.

The event has been the highlight of the military racing calendar since it was first run in Northampton back in 1841 and run on and off ever since (off during the two world wars, Crimea and Boer wars, plus occasions when the British weather has intervened).

Since 1881, Sandown Park in Surrey has been the event's home with two of the six races on the day this year – Friday March 11 from 2pm – featuring jockeys who are serving or former military personnel (a Royal Marine and lieutenant commander are due to fly the flag for the Senior Service).

In between the half dozen jump races, there'll be various military entertainment including a military band and a parade of hunt hounds and proceeds from the event will go to Service charities.

Tickets for the day start at £16 in advance for individuals all the way up to £270 if you fancy a private box.

Admission to the premier enclosure for Service personnel is reduced from £25 to £13 (plus postage) if ordered in advance, using the Booking Code GM2016, from 0844 579 3012, www.sandown.ticketing@thejockeyclub.co.uk or by visiting sandown.thejockeyclub.co.uk/events-tickets/whats-on/grand-military-gold-cup-day

Making a right racket

MORE than 30 competitors took part in the Royal Navy **Badminton Open Championships** at Fort Blockhouse in Gosport.

The annual two-day contest is for players across the Navy and Royal Marines to take part in singles, doubles and mixed matches – whether you are experienced or never picked up a racket before.

On the second day, a restricted competition was started, running alongside the main tournament. Players who had already represented the Royal Navy at badminton were excluded from these restricted games, and so the opportunity for everyone else was there to become winners in their own right.

It resulted in some very closely-fought matches, and in the end MA Jordan Holland (ladies' singles), Sub Lt Ian Frith (men's singles), MA Holland and LWtr Nici Cale (ladies' doubles), Sub Lt Frith and LPT Lee Jones (men's doubles), and Surg Capt Paul Hughes and Musn Natalie Wade (mixed), were restricted champions.

The competition was twinned with a sad goodbye to Cdr David Hill, marking his departure from not only Royal Navy Badminton but his time in the Service.

Cdr Hill, who has been involved with RN badminton for 27 years, was presented with a decanter set by his successor Surg Capt Hughes, who will take on presidency duties.



Reservists on fire in the snow

● Above: From left, Sub Lt Ian Dorward, Lt Cdr Andrew Carey, Midshipman Andrew Crawford, and CPO Martin Cannon

Right: LS Nicki Hopkins receives her silver medal



SIX reservists from HMS Wildfire at Northwood competed in the Royal Navy Ski Championships in Tignes.

LS Nicki Hopkins won a silver medal in the grand slalom while Lt Cdr Andrew Carey, Sub Lt Ian Dorward, Midshipman Andrew Crawford and CPO Martin Cannon took team silver.

CPO Cannon said: "Having never skied before, I learned at the championships six years ago and each year since I have had two days of lessons; they are very professional and extremely good value."





Fly as free as a bird

PARAGLIDER Andy Claxton soars over the Turquoise coast of southwestern Turkey – one of a number of spectacular locations the Royal Navy officer has visited in pursuit of his sport.

"In my opinion there is no other method of free flight that closely relates to flying naturally like a bird as paragliding," said Lt Cdr Claxton. "It's just you and a harness suspended below a flexible wing."

"This means you are completely reliant on rising air currents to soar or thermal. Every flight is different, be it soaring 200-300ft above a coastal site, flying cross country at 5,000-6,000ft using the wind and thermals to travel great distances or learning acrobatic moves to get the adrenaline flowing."

Lt Cdr Claxton took up the sport in 2006 and, thanks to the association, achieved his aim of learning to fly without costing him anything.

"One day, whilst in Cornwall, I was fortunate to see someone flying a paraglider above the cliffs. It looked amazing especially given the tranquillity of the scenery."

"I went back to work and checked to see if paragliding was a recognised Joint Services Adventurous Training Scheme activity... it was."

Over the next year Lt Cdr Claxton completed the

Great opportunity awaits junior rates

Elementary Pilot and Club Pilot courses offered by the Joint Services Paragliding Centre in Crickhowell and qualified to fly unsupervised through a training scheme registered under the British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association.

"Having been assigned to RNAS Culdrose in 2008 I soon found myself at the same cliffs, that I'd seen a few years before, only this time it was me looking down!"

As well as paragliding over Ölüdeniz, the Turkish resort where the Mediterranean meets the Aegean, Lt Cdr Claxton has paraglided over the Annapurna foothills of Nepal, Australia, the Moroccan Atlas mountains, Bavaria and the French Alps.

And now many more Service personnel will have the opportunity to take part as the Royal Navy Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association has secured funding for a number of junior rates to obtain flying equipment.

On average, a wing, harness and reserve parachute costs around £4,000 to buy new. Thanks to a donation from Service charities and the RN/RM Sports Lottery, the

association can provide the equipment.

The cost to students will be the service charge of around £10 per month and their own paragliding helmet, which costs around £80.

The UK Armed Forces Paragliding Association and individual Service associations offer numerous subsidised training exercises and overseas expeditions throughout the year and annually all three Services meet to battle it out over the South Wales skies as they compete for the Inter-Services Championship trophy.

Lt Cdr Claxton added: "For me, paragliding is best summed by Leonardo da Vinci, who said: 'Once you have tasted flight, you will forever walk the earth with your eyes turned skywards, for there you have been, and there you will long to return'."

Any Able Seamen, Leading Hands or Royal Marines equivalents interested in taking part in the sport should visit <http://defenceintranet.diif.rmil.uk/Organisations/Orgs/RAF/Organisations/Orgs/GETC/Pages/Joint%20Services%20Paragliding%20Centre.aspx>

Road champions start title defence

THE Royal Navy Royal Marines Road Racing Team begin the defence of their Inter-Service Championship title this month.

The team took the honours for 2015 in the last round of the GB Racing Inter-Service Championships.

Some tight racing saw riders pushing hard early leaving a few to make close friends with some of the Cadwell Park scenery. This in turn opened things up even more with the inevitable banter in the paddock hotting up just as much as the racing.

It was clear the title was between the RAF and RN with the individual honours still for the taking. The first race on the Sunday sealed the championships with the RN riders finishing well up the grid.

The RN Championships came down to the last race. An uncharacteristic mistake by Bill Calister saw him sitting watching the race from the side with just three laps remaining.

This however was not the only casualty that day as in the previous 600cc race Steve Elliot and Lee Howarth both went down leaving Alister Wright free to take the honours.

Last year was a great season with the team steadily growing.

The 2016 championship is looking strong with Thundersport GB remaining as hosts and GB Racing again supporting.

You can catch the antics on MOTORS TV or at www.thundersportgb.com on their i-Player service. Even better speak to your PTI and find out how you can become part of the team.

Results:

Inter-Service Championship Team: 1st RN (1931 points), 2nd RAF (1743 points), 3rd Army (1414 points)

Individual: 1st Paul Cunvin (RAF), 2nd Alister Wright (RM), 3rd Lee Howarth (RM)

RN & RM Championship: 1st Alister Wright (RM), 2nd Lee



● Above; RNRMRRT manager Brian Fuidge in action; Below, members of the RNRMRRT at the 2015 season awards night



Howarth (RM), 3rd Bill Calister (RM)

GB Racing British Military Inter-Service 2016 Round one: Brands Hatch, March 4 to 6; Round two: Snetterton, April 30 to May 2; Round three: Rockingham, July 29-31; Round four: Donington Park, September

23-25; Round five: Cadwell Park, October 14-16.

RNRMRRT Championships 2016 Round one: Donington Park, March 26-28; Round two: Cadwell Park, May 28-30; Round three: Oulton Park, July 1-2; Round four: Anglesey, August 27-29.

Right move from Mike

ROYAL Navy rugby league player Mike Haldenby scored two tries as the Senior Service came close to causing a major upset in the Ladbroke Rugby League Challenge Cup.

ET Haldenby's second try, a spectacular dive over the defence, brought the RN level with Conference side Featherstone Lions and ET Ryan Matthews appeared to have won it with his conversion.

But the Lions scored a late try courtesy of a clever grubber-kick which gave them the game. Cpl Steve Riley also scored a brace of tries.

The previous week saw the annual player awards dinner at HMS Excellent. The 2015 Man of Steel award went to AET Tommy Wilkinson, while individual team coach awards went to CPO Kev Botwood, AET Lee Gaskell and CPO Marie Hallam for the senior, academy and women's sides respectively. President of the RNRL Rear Admiral Alex Burton presented an award to head coach POPT Steve Lockton and Director of Rugby CPO Dave Garner.

The RNRL Academy side then undertook the long journey to Lancashire, where they were beaten by Conference team Wigan St Jude's. The eve of the game saw the Brothers provide a guard of honour for the televised Super League match between the Wigan Warriors and the Catalan Dragons.

See the season's fixtures at www.pitchero.com/clubs/royalnavyrugbyleague/



● Double try scorer ET Mike Haldenby

Picture: SBS Photography